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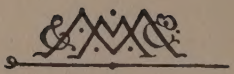

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ESSAYS OF JOSEPH ADDISON

CHOSEN AND EDITED
WITH A PREFACE AND A FEW NOTES

BY

SIR JAMES GEORGE FRAZER
FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
AND OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

WITHDRAWI

IN TWO VOLUMES
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ESSAYS OF ADDISON

LXXX

Lucky Numbers

—οὖλον ὄνειρον.—Hom.

Some ludicrous schoolmen have put the case, that if an ass were placed between two bundles of hay, which affected his senses equally on each side, and tempted him in the very same degree, whether it would be possible for him to eat of either. They generally determine this question to the disadvantage of the ass, who they say would starve in the midst of plenty, as not having a single grain of free-will to determine him more to the one than to the other. The bundle of hay on either side striking his sight and smell in the same proportion, would keep him in a perpetual suspense, like the two magnets which, travellers have told us, are placed one of them in the roof, and the other in the floor of Mahomet's burying-place at Mecca, and by that means, say they, pull the impostor's iron coffin with such an equal attraction, that it hangs in the air between both of them. As for the ass's behaviour in such nice circumstances, whether he would starve

sooner than violate his neutrality to the two bundles of hay, I shall not presume to determine; but only take notice of the conduct of our own species in the same perplexity. When a man has a mind to venture his money in a lottery, every figure of it appears equally alluring, and as likely to succeed as any of its fellows. They all of them have the same pretensions to good luck, stand upon the same foot of competition, and no manner of reason can be given why a man should prefer one to the other before the lottery is drawn. In this case therefore caprice very often acts in the place of reason, and forms to itself some groundless imaginary motive, where real and substantial ones are wanting. I know a well-meaning man that is very well pleased to risk his good fortune upon the number 1711, because it is the year of our Lord. I am acquainted with a tacker that would give a good deal for the number 134.[1] On the contrary I have been told of a certain zealous Dissenter, who, being a great enemy to Popery, and believing that bad men are the most fortunate in this world, will lay two to one on the number 666 against any other number, because, says he, it is the number of the Beast. Several would prefer the number 12,000 before any other, as it is the number of the pounds in the great prize. In short, some are pleased to find their own age in their number; some that they have got a number which makes a pretty appearance in the ciphers; and others,

[1] "The number of the minority who were in 1704 for tacking a Bill against Occasional Conformity to a Money Bill."—H. MORLEY.

because it is the same number that succeeded in the last lottery. Each of these, upon no other grounds, thinks he stands fairest for the great lot, and that he is possessed of what may not be improperly called the Golden Number.

These principles of election are the pastimes and extravagances of human reason, which is of so busy a nature, that it will be exerting itself in the meanest trifles, and working even when it wants materials. The wisest of men are sometimes acted by such unaccountable motives, as the life of the fool and the superstitious is guided by nothing else.

I am surprised that none of the fortune-tellers, or, as the French call them, the *Diseurs de bonne Aventure*, who publish their bills in every quarter of the town, have turned our lotteries to their advantage: did any of them set up for a caster of fortunate figures, what might he not get by his pretended discoveries and predictions?

I remember among the advertisements in the *Post-Boy* of September the 27th, I was surprised to see the following one:

"This is to give notice, that ten shillings over and above the market price, will be given for the ticket in the £1,500,000 lottery, No. 132, by Nath. Cliff at the Bible and Three Crowns in Cheapside."

This advertisement has given great matter of speculation to Coffee-house theorists. Mr. Cliff's principles and conversation have been canvassed upon this occasion, and various conjectures made why he should thus set his heart upon No. 132. I have examined all

the powers in those numbers, broken them into fractions, extracted the square and cube root, divided and multiplied them all ways, but could not arrive at the secret till about three days ago, when I received the following letter from an unknown hand, by which I find that Mr. Nathaniel Cliff is only the agent, and not the principal, in this advertisement.

"MR. SPECTATOR—I am the person that lately advertised I would give ten shillings more than the current price for the ticket No. 132, in the lottery now drawing; which is a secret I have communicated to some friends, who rally me incessantly upon that account. You must know I have but one ticket, for which reason, and a certain dream I have lately had more than once, I was resolved it should be the number I most approved. I am so positive I have pitched upon the great lot, that I could almost lay all I am worth of it. My visions are so frequent and strong upon this occasion, that I have not only possessed the lot, but disposed of the money which in all probability it will sell for. This morning, in particular, I set up an equipage which I look upon to be the gayest in the town. The liveries are very rich, but not gaudy. I should be very glad to see a speculation or two upon lottery subjects, in which you would oblige all people concerned, and in particular your most humble Servant, GEORGE GOSLING.

"*P.S.*—Dear SPEC., if I get the 12,000 pound, I'll make thee a handsome present."

After having wished my correspondent good luck, and thanked him for his intended kindness, I shall for this time dismiss the subject of the lottery, and only observe that the greatest part of mankind are in some degree guilty of my friend Gosling's extravagance. We are apt to rely upon future prospects, and become really expensive while we are only rich in possibility. We live up to our expectations, not to our possessions, and make a figure proportionable to what we may be, not what we are. We outrun our present income, as not doubting to disburse ourselves out of the profits of some future place, project, or reversion that we have in view. It is through this temper of mind, which is so common among us, that we see tradesmen break, who have met with no misfortunes in their business; and men of estates reduced to poverty, who have never suffered from losses or repairs, tenants, taxes, or law-suits. In short, it is this foolish, sanguine temper, this depending upon contingent futurities, that occasions romantic generosity, chimerical grandeur, senseless ostentation, and generally ends in beggary and ruin. The man who will live above his present circumstances, is in great danger of living in a little time much beneath them, or, as the Italian proverb runs, *The man who lives by hope will die by hunger.*

It should be an indispensable rule in life, to contract our desires to our present condition, and whatever may be our expectations, to live within the compass of what we actually possess. It will be time enough to enjoy an estate when it comes into our hands; but

if we anticipate our good fortune, we shall lose the pleasure of it when it arrives, and may possibly never possess what we have so foolishly counted upon.

The Spectator, No. 191. Tuesday, October 9, 1711.

LXXXI

Simonides on Women

Γυναικὸς οὐδὲ χρῆμ' ἀνὴρ λῃΐζεται
ἐσθλῆς ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ ῥίγιον κακῆς.—SIMONIDES.

THERE are no authors I am more pleased with than those who show human nature in a variety of views, and describe the several ages of the world in their different manners. A reader cannot be more rationally entertained, than by comparing the virtues and vices of his own times with those which prevailed in the times of his forefathers; and drawing a parallel in his mind between his own private character and that of other persons, whether of his own age or of the ages that went before him. The contemplation of mankind under these changeable colours is apt to shame us out of any particular vice, or animate us to any particular virtue, to make us pleased or displeased with ourselves in the most proper points, to clear our minds of prejudice and prepossession, and rectify that narrowness of temper which inclines us to think amiss of those who differ from ourselves.

If we look into the manners of the most remote ages of the world, we discover human nature in her

simplicity; and the more we come downward towards our own times, may observe her hiding herself in artifices and refinements, polished insensibly out of her original plainness, and at length entirely lost under form and ceremony and (what we call) good breeding. Read the accounts of men and women as they are given us by the most ancient writers, both sacred and profane, and you would think you were reading the history of another species.

Among the writers of antiquity, there are none who instruct us more openly in the manners of their respective times in which they lived, than those who have employed themselves in satire, under what dress soever it may appear; as there are no other authors whose province it is to enter so directly into the ways of men, and set their miscarriages in so strong a light.

Simonides, a poet famous in his generation, is, I think, author of the oldest satire that is now extant; and, as some say, of the first that was ever written. This poet flourished about four hundred years after the siege of Troy, and shows by his way of writing the simplicity, or rather coarseness, of the age in which he lived. I have taken notice, in my hundred and sixty-first speculation, that the rule of observing what the French call the *bienséance* in an allusion has been found out of later years; and that the ancients, provided there was a likeness in their similitudes, did not much trouble themselves about the decency of the comparison. The satire or iambics of Simonides, with which I shall entertain my readers in the present

paper, are a remarkable instance of what I formerly advanced. The subject of this satire is woman. He describes the sex in their several characters, which he derives to them from a fanciful supposition raised upon the doctrine of pre-existence. He tells us, that the gods formed the souls of women out of those seeds and principles which compose several kinds of animals and elements, and that their good or bad dispositions arise in them according as such and such seeds and principles predominate in their constitutions. I have translated the author very faithfully, and if not word for word (which our language would not bear), at least so as to comprehend every one of his sentiments, without adding anything of my own. I have already apologized for this author's want of delicacy, and must further premise, that the following satire affects only some of the lower part of the sex, and not those who have been refined by a polite education, which was not so common in the age of this poet.

"In the beginning God made the souls of womankind out of different materials, and in a separate state from their bodies.

"The souls of one kind of women were formed out of those ingredients which compose a swine. A woman of this make is a slut in her house, and a glutton at her table. She is uncleanly in her person, a slattern in her dress, and her family is no better than a dunghill.

"A second sort of female soul was formed out of the same materials that enter into the composition of a fox. Such an one is what we call a notable dis-

cerning woman, who has an insight into everything, whether it be good or bad. In this species of females there are some virtuous and some vicious.

" A third kind of women were made up of canine particles. These are what we commonly call scolds, who imitate the animals out of which they were taken, that are always busy and barking, that snarl at every one who comes in their way, and live in perpetual clamour.

" The fourth kind of women were made out of the earth. These are your sluggards, who pass away their time in indolence and ignorance, hover over the fire a whole winter, and apply themselves with alacrity to no kind of business but eating.

" The fifth species of females were made out of the sea. These are women of variable uneven tempers, sometimes all storm and tempest, sometimes all calm and sunshine. The stranger who sees one of these in her smiles and smoothness would cry her up for a miracle of good humour ; but on a sudden her looks and words are changed, she is nothing but fury and outrage, noise and hurricane.

" The sixth species were made up of the ingredients which compose an ass or a beast of burden. These are naturally exceeding slothful, but upon the husband's exerting his authority will live upon hard fare, and do everything to please him. They are however far from being averse to venereal pleasure, and seldom refuse a male companion.

" The cat furnished materials for a seventh species

of women, who are of a melancholy, froward, unamiable nature, and so repugnant to the offers of love, that they fly in the face of their husband when he approaches them with conjugal endearments. This species of women are likewise subject to little thefts, cheats, and pilferings.

" The mare with a flowing mane, which was never broke to any servile toil and labour, composed an eighth species of women. These are they who have little regard for their husbands, who pass away their time in dressing, bathing, and perfuming; who throw their hair into the nicest curls, and trick it up with the fairest flowers and garlands. A woman of this species is a very pretty thing for a stranger to look upon, but very detrimental to the owner, unless it be a king or prince who takes a fancy to such a toy.

" The ninth species of females were taken out of the ape. These are such as are both ugly and ill-natured, who have nothing beautiful in themselves, and endeavour to detract from or ridicule everything which appears so in others.

" The tenth and last species of women were made out of the bee; and happy is the man who gets such an one for his wife. She is altogether faultless and unblameable; her family flourishes and improves by her good management. She loves her husband, and is beloved by him. She brings him a race of beautiful and virtuous children. She distinguishes herself among her sex. She is surrounded with graces. She never sits among the loose tribe of women, nor passes

away her time with them in wanton discourses. She is full of virtue and prudence, and is the best wife that Jupiter can bestow on man."

I shall conclude these iambics with the motto of this paper, which is a fragment of the same author: "A man cannot possess anything that is better than a good woman, nor anything that is worse than a bad one."

As the poet has shown a great penetration in this diversity of female characters, he has avoided the fault which Juvenal and Monsieur Boileau are guilty of, the former in his sixth, and the other in his last satire, where they have endeavoured to expose the sex in general, without doing justice to the valuable part of it. Such levelling satires are of no use to the world, and for this reason I have often wondered how the French author above-mentioned, who was a man of exquisite judgment and a lover of virtue, could think human nature a proper subject for satire in another of his celebrated pieces, which is called *The Satire upon Man*. What vice or frailty can a discourse correct, which censures the whole species alike, and endeavours to show by some superficial strokes of wit, that brutes are the more excellent creatures of the two? A satire should expose nothing but what is corrigible, and make a due discrimination between those who are, and those who are not, the proper objects of it.

The Spectator, No. 209. Tuesday, October 30, 1711.

LXXXII

Transmigration

Fictis meminerit nos jocari fabulis.—PHAED.

HAVING lately translated the fragment of an old poet, which describes womankind under several characters, and supposes them to have drawn their different manners and dispositions from those animals and elements out of which he tells us they were compounded; I had some thoughts of giving the sex their revenge, by laying together in another paper the many vicious characters which prevail in the male world, and showing the different ingredients that go to the making up of such different humours and constitutions. Horace has a thought which is something akin to this, when, in order to excuse himself to his mistress, for an invective which he had written against her, and to account for that unreasonable fury with which the heart of man is often transported, he tells us that, when Prometheus made his man of clay, in the kneading up of the heart he seasoned it with some furious particles of the lion. But upon turning this plan to and fro in my thoughts, I observed so many unaccountable humours in man, that I did not know out of what animals to fetch them. Male souls are diversified with so many characters, that the world has not variety of materials sufficient to furnish out their different tempers and inclinations. The creation, with all its animals and elements, would

not be large enough to supply their several extravagances.

Instead, therefore, of pursuing the thought of Simonides, I shall observe, that as he has exposed the vicious part of women from the doctrine of pre-existence, some of the ancient philosophers have, in a manner, satirized the vicious part of the human species in general, from a notion of the soul's post-existence, if I may so call it; and that as Simonides describes brutes entering into the composition of women, others have represented human souls as entering into brutes. This is commonly termed the doctrine of transmigration, which supposes that human souls, upon their leaving the body, become the souls of such kinds of brutes as they most resemble in their manners; or to give an account of it, as Mr. Dryden has described it in his translation of Pythagoras his speech in the fifteenth book of Ovid, where that philosopher dissuades his hearers from eating flesh:

> Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies,
> And here and there the unbodied spirit flies,
> By time, or force, or sickness dispossessed,
> And lodges where it lights, in bird or beast,
> Or hunts without till ready limbs it find,
> And actuates those according to their kind;
> From tenement to tenement is tossed:
> The soul is still the same, the figure only lost.
> Then let not piety be put to flight,
> To please the taste of glutton-appetite;
> But suffer inmate souls secure to dwell,
> Lest from their seats your parents you expel;
> With rabid hunger feed upon your kind,
> Or from a beast dislodge a brother's mind.

Plato in the vision of Erus the Armenian, which I may possibly make the subject of a future speculation, records some beautiful transmigrations; as that the soul of Orpheus, who was musical, melancholy, and a woman-hater, entered into a swan; the soul of Ajax, which was all wrath and fierceness, into a lion; the soul of Agamemnon, that was rapacious and imperial, into an eagle; and the soul of Thersites, who was a mimic and a buffoon, into a monkey.

Mr. Congreve, in a prologue to one of his comedies, has touched upon this doctrine with great humour.

> Thus Aristotle's soul, of old that was,
> May now be damned to animate an ass;
> Or in this very house, for aught we know,
> Is doing painful penance in some beau.

I shall fill up this paper with some letters which my last Tuesday's speculation has produced. My following correspondents will show, what I there observed, that the speculation of that day affects only the lower part of the sex.

"*From my house in the Strand, October* 30, 1711.

"Mr. Spectator—Upon reading your Tuesday's paper, I find by several symptoms in my constitution that I am a bee. My shop, or, if you please to call it so, my cell, is in that great hive of females which goes by the name of the New Exchange; where I am daily employed in gathering together a little stock of gain from the finest flowers about the town, I mean the ladies and the beaus. I have a numerous swarm of

children, to whom I give the best education I am able: but, sir, it is my misfortune to be married to a drone, who lives upon what I get, without bringing anything into the common stock. Now, sir, as on the one hand I take care not to behave myself towards him like a wasp, so likewise I would not have him look upon me as an humble-bee; for which reason I do all I can to put him upon laying up provisions for a bad day, and frequently represent to him the fatal effects his sloth and negligence may bring upon us in our old age. I must beg that you will join with me in your good advice upon this occasion, and you will for ever oblige your humble servant, MELISSA."

"*Piccadilly, October* 31, 1711.

"SIR—I am joined in wedlock for my sins to one of those fillies who are described in the old poet with that hard name you gave us the other day. She has a flowing mane, and a skin as soft as silk: but, sir, she passes half her life at her glass, and almost ruins me in ribbons. For my own part, I am a plain handicraft man, and in danger of breaking by her laziness and expensiveness. Pray, master, tell me in your next paper, whether I may not expect of her so much drudgery as to take care of her family, and curry her hide in case of refusal. —Your loving friend, BARNABY BRITTLE."

"*Cheapside, October* 30.

"MR. SPECTATOR—I am mightily pleased with the humour of the cat; be so kind as to enlarge upon that subject.—Yours till death, JOSIAH HENPECK."

"P.S.—You must know I am married to a grimalkin."

"*Wapping, October* 31, 1711.

"SIR—Ever since your *Spectator* of Tuesday last came into our family, my husband is pleased to call me his Oceana, because the foolish old poet that you have translated says, that the souls of some women are made of sea-water. This, it seems, has encouraged my sauce-box to be witty upon me. When I am angry, he cries, "Prithee, my dear, be calm"; when I chide one of my servants, "Prithee, child, do not bluster." He had the impudence about an hour ago to tell me, that he was a seafaring man, and must expect to divide his life between storm and sunshine. When I bestir myself with any spirit in my family it is "high sea" in his house; and when I sit still without doing anything, his affairs forsooth are "wind-bound." When I ask him whether it rains, he makes answer, "It is no matter, so that it be 'fair weather' within doors." In short, sir, I cannot speak my mind freely to him, but I either "swell" or "rage," or do something that is not fit for a civil woman to hear. Pray, MR. SPECTATOR, since you are so sharp upon other women, let us know what materials your wife is made of, if you have one. I suppose you would make us a parcel of poor-spirited tame insipid creatures; but, sir, I would have you to know, we have as good passions in us as yourself, and that a woman was never designed to be a milksop. MARTHA TEMPEST."

The Spectator, No. 211. Thursday, November 1, 1711.

PRESENTED TO ST. MARY'S COLLEGE
BY REV. T. CALLAGHAN

LXXXIII

Walking with God

—Mens sibi conscia recti.—VIRG.

IT is the great art and secret of Christianity, if I may use that phrase, to manage our actions to the best advantage, and direct them in such a manner, that everything we do may turn to account at that great day, when everything we have done will be set before us.

In order to give this consideration its full weight, we may cast all our actions under the division of such as are in themselves either good, evil, or indifferent. If we divide our intentions after the same manner, and consider them with regard to our actions, we may discover that great art and secret of religion which I have here mentioned.

A good intention, joined to a good action, gives it its proper force and efficacy; joined to an evil action, extenuates its malignity, and in some cases may take it wholly away; and joined to an indifferent action, turns it to virtue, and makes it meritorious as far as human actions can be so.

In the next place, to consider in the same manner the influence of an evil intention upon our actions. An evil intention perverts the best of actions, and makes them in reality what the Fathers with a witty kind of zeal have termed the virtues of the heathen world, so many "shining sins." It destroys the

innocence of an indifferent action, and gives an evil action all possible blackness and horror, or, in the emphatical language of sacred writ, makes "sin exceeding sinful."

If, in the last place, we consider the nature of an indifferent intention, we shall find that it destroys the merit of a good action; abates, but never takes away, the malignity of an evil action; and leaves an indifferent action in its natural state of indifference.

It is therefore of unspeakable advantage to possess our minds with an habitual good intention, and to aim all our thoughts, words, and actions at some laudable end, whether it be the glory of our Maker, the good of mankind, or the benefit of our own souls.

This is a sort of thrift or good husbandry in moral life, which does not throw away any single action, but makes every one go as far as it can. It multiplies the means of salvation, increases the number of our virtues, and diminishes that of our vices.

There is something very devout, though not so solid, in Acosta's answer to Limborch, who objects to him the multiplicity of ceremonies in the Jewish religion, as washings, dresses, meats, purgations, and the like. The reply which the Jew makes upon this occasion, is, to the best of my remembrance, as follows: "There are not duties enough," says he, "in the essential parts of the law for a zealous and active obedience. Time, place, and person are requisite, before you have an opportunity of putting a moral virtue into practice. We have therefore," says he,

"enlarged the sphere of our duty, and made many things, which are in themselves indifferent, a part of our religion, that we may have more occasions of showing our love to God, and in all the circumstances of life be doing something to please him."

Monsieur St. Evremond has endeavoured to palliate the superstitions of the Roman Catholic religion with the same kind of apology, where he pretends to consider the different spirit of the Papists and the Calvinists, as to the great points wherein they disagree. He tells us, that the former are actuated by love, and the other by fear; and that in their expressions of duty and devotion towards the Supreme Being, the former seem particularly careful to do everything which may possibly please him, and the other to abstain from everything which may possibly displease him.

But notwithstanding this plausible reason with which both the Jew and the Roman Catholic would excuse their respective superstitions, it is certain there is something in them very pernicious to mankind, and destructive to religion; because the injunction of superfluous ceremonies makes such actions duties, as were before indifferent, and by that means renders religion more burdensome and difficult than it is in its own nature, betrays many into sins of omission which they could not otherwise be guilty of, and fixes the minds of the vulgar to the shadowy unessential points, instead of the more weighty and more important matters of the law.

This zealous and active obedience however takes

place in the great point we are recommending; for if, instead of prescribing to ourselves indifferent actions as duties, we apply a good intention to all our most indifferent actions, we make our very existence one continued act of obedience, we turn our diversions and amusements to our eternal advantage, and are pleasing Him (whom we are made to please) in all the circumstances and occurrences of life.

It is this excellent frame of mind, this *holy officiousness* (if I may be allowed to call it such) which is recommended to us by the apostle in that uncommon precept, wherein he directs us to propose to ourselves the glory of our Creator in all our most indifferent actions, "whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do."

A person therefore who is possessed with such an habitual good intention as that which I have been here speaking of, enters upon no single circumstance of life without considering it as well-pleasing to the great Author of his being, conformable to the dictates of reason, suitable to human nature in general, or to the particular station in which Providence has placed him. He lives in a perpetual sense of the divine presence, regards himself as acting, in the whole course of his existence, under the observation and inspection of that Being, who is privy to all his motions and all his thoughts, who knows his "down-sitting and his uprising, who is about his path, and about his bed, and spieth out all his ways." In a word, he remembers that the eye of his Judge is always upon him, and in

every action he reflects that he is doing what is commanded or allowed by Him who will hereafter either reward or punish it. This was the character of those holy men of old, who in that beautiful phrase of Scripture are said to have "walked with God."

When I employ myself upon a paper of morality, I generally consider how I may recommend the particular virtue which I treat of, by the precepts or examples of the ancient heathens; by that means, if possible, to shame those who have greater advantages of knowing their duty, and therefore greater obligations to perform it, into a better course of life: besides that many among us are unreasonably disposed to give a fairer hearing to a pagan philosopher than to a Christian writer.

I shall therefore produce an instance of this excellent frame of mind in a speech of Socrates, which is quoted by Erasmus. This great philosopher, on the day of his execution, a little before the draught of poison was brought to him, entertaining his friends with a discourse on the immortality of the soul, has these words: "Whether or no God will approve of my actions, I know not; but this I am sure of, that I have at all times made it my endeavour to please him, and I have a good hope that this my endeavour will be accepted by him." We find in these words of that great man the habitual good intention which I would here inculcate, and with which that divine philosopher always acted. I shall only add that Erasmus, who was an unbigoted Roman Catholic, was so much

transported with this passage of Socrates, that he could scarce forbear looking upon him as a saint, and desiring him to pray for him; or as that ingenious and learned writer has expressed himself in a much more lively manner, "When I reflect on such a speech pronounced by such a person, I can scarce forbear crying out, *Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis.* O holy Socrates, pray for us."

The Spectator, No. 213. Saturday, November 3, 1711.

LXXXIV

Mottoes and Signatures

—Ab ovo
Usque ad mala. HOR.

WHEN I have finished any of my speculations, it is my method to consider which of the ancient authors have touched upon the subject that I treat of. By this means I meet with some celebrated thought upon it, or a thought of my own expressed in better words, or some similitude for the illustration of my subject. This is what gives birth to the motto of a speculation, which I rather choose to take out of the poets than the prose writers, as the former generally give a finer turn to a thought than the latter, and, by couching it in few words, and in harmonious numbers, make it more portable to the memory.

My reader is therefore sure to meet with at least one good line in every paper, and very often finds his

imagination entertained by a hint that awakens in his memory some beautiful passage of a classic author.

It was a saying of an ancient philosopher, which I find some of our writers have ascribed to Queen Elizabeth, who perhaps might have taken occasion to repeat it, "That a good face is a letter of recommendation." It naturally makes the beholders inquisitive into the person who is the owner of it, and generally prepossesses them in his favour. A handsome motto has the same effect. Besides that, it always gives a supernumerary beauty to a paper, and is sometimes in a manner necessary when the writer is engaged in what may appear a paradox to vulgar minds, as it shows that he is supported by good authorities, and is not singular in his opinion.

I must confess, the motto is of little use to an unlearned reader, for which reason I consider it only as "a word to the wise." But as for my unlearned friends, if they cannot relish the motto, I take care to make provision for them in the body of my paper. If they do not understand the sign that is hung out, they know very well by it, that they may meet with entertainment in the house; and I think I was never better pleased than with a plain man's compliment, who, upon his friend's telling him that he would like the *Spectator* much better if he understood the motto, replied that, "Good wine needs no bush."

I have heard of a couple of preachers in a country town, who endeavoured which should outshine one another, and draw together the greatest congregation.

One of them, being well versed in the Fathers, used to quote every now and then a Latin sentence to his illiterate hearers, who it seems found themselves so edified by it, that they flocked in greater numbers to this learned man than to his rival. The other, finding his congregation mouldering every Sunday, and hearing at length what was the occasion of it, resolved to give his parish a little Latin in his turn; but being unacquainted with any of the Fathers, he digested into his sermons the whole book of *Quae Genus*,[1] adding however such explications to it as he thought might be for the benefit of his people. He afterwards entered upon *As in praesenti*,[1] which he converted in the same manner to the use of his parishioners. This in a very little time thickened his audience, filled his church, and routed his antagonist.

The natural love to Latin, which is so prevalent in our common people, makes me think that my speculations fare never the worse among them for that little scrap which appears at the head of them; and what the more encourages me in the use of quotations in an unknown tongue is, that I hear the ladies, whose approbation I value more than that of the whole learned world, declare themselves in a more particular manner pleased with my Greek mottoes.

Designing this day's work for a dissertation upon the two extremities of my paper, and having already dispatched my motto, I shall, in the next place, discourse upon those single capital letters which are

[1] Initial words in certain rules in Lilly's *Latin Grammar*.

placed at the end of it, and which have afforded great matter of speculation to the curious.[1] I have heard various conjectures upon this subject. Some tell us that C is the mark of those papers that are written by the Clergyman, though others ascribe them to the Club in general: that the papers marked with R were written by my friend Sir Roger: that L signifies the Lawyer, whom I have described in my second Speculation; and that T stands for the Trader or Merchant: but the letter X, which is placed at the end of some few of my papers, is that which has puzzled the whole town, as they cannot think of any name which begins with that letter, except Xenophon and Xerxes, who can neither of them be supposed to have had any hand in these speculations.

In answer to these inquisitive gentlemen, who have many of them made inquiries of me by letter, I must tell them the reply of an ancient philosopher, who carried something hidden under his cloak. A certain acquaintance desiring him to let him know what it was he covered so carefully, "I cover it," says he, "on purpose that you should not know." I have made use of these obscure marks for the same purpose. They are, perhaps, little amulets or charms to preserve the paper against the fascination and malice of evil eyes; for which reason I would not have my reader surprised, if hereafter he sees any of my papers marked with a Q, a Z, a Y, an etc., or with the word Abracadabra.

[1] These capitals, omitted in this edition, really distinguished the various authors of the essays in *The Spectator*.

I shall, however, so far explain myself to the reader, as to let him know that the letters C, L, and X are cabalistical, and carry more in them than it is proper for the world to be acquainted with. Those who are versed in the philosophy of Pythagoras, and swear by the Tetracthtys, that is, the number four, will know very well that the number ten, which is signified by the letter X (and which has so much perplexed the town), has in it many particular powers; that it is called by Platonic writers the complete number; that one, two, three, and four, put together make up the number ten; and that ten is all. But these are not mysteries for ordinary readers to be let into. A man must have spent many years in hard study before he can arrive at the knowledge of them.

We had a rabbinical divine in England, who was chaplain to the Earl of Essex in Queen Elizabeth's time, that had an admirable head for secrets of this nature. Upon his taking the doctor of divinity's degree, he preached before the university of Cambridge, upon the first verse of the first chapter of the first book of Chronicles, in which, says he, you will see the three following words,

Adam, Sheth, Enosh.

He divided this short text into many parts, and by discovering several mysteries in each word, made a most learned and elaborate discourse. The name of this profound preacher was Doctor Alabaster, of whom the reader may find a more particular account in Doctor

Fuller's book of English Worthies. This instance will, I hope, convince my readers that there may be a great deal of fine writing in the capital letters which bring up the rear of my paper, and give them some satisfaction in that particular. But as for the full explication of these matters, I must refer them to time, which discovers all things.

The Spectator, No. 221. Tuesday, November 13, 1711.

LXXXV

The Trunk-maker

—Populares
Vincentem strepitus. HOR.

THERE is nothing which lies more within the province of a Spectator than public shows and diversions; and as among these there are none which can pretend to vie with those elegant entertainments that are exhibited in our theatres, I think it particularly incumbent on me to take notice of everything that is remarkable in such numerous and refined assemblies.

It is observed, that of late years there has been a certain person in the upper gallery of the play-house, who, when he is pleased with anything that is acted upon the stage, expresses his approbation by a loud knock upon the benches or the wainscot, which may be heard over the whole theatre. This person is commonly known by the name of the "Trunk-maker in the upper gallery." Whether it be, that the blow he gives

on these occasions resembles that which is often heard in the shops of such artisans, or that he was supposed to have been a real trunk-maker, who, after the finishing of his day's work, used to unbend his mind at these public diversions with his hammer in his hand, I cannot certainly tell. There are some, I know, who have been foolish enough to imagine it is a spirit which haunts the upper gallery, and from time to time makes those strange noises; and the rather, because he is observed to be louder than ordinary every time the ghost of *Hamlet* appears. Others have reported, that it is a dumb man, who has chosen this way of uttering himself, when he is transported with anything he sees or hears. Others will have it to be the play-house thunderer, that exerts himself after this manner in the upper gallery, when he has nothing to do upon the roof.

But having made it my business to get the best information I could in a matter of this moment, I find that the trunk-maker, as he is commonly called, is a large black man, whom nobody knows. He generally leans forward on a huge oaken plant with great attention to everything that passes upon the stage. He is never seen to smile; but upon hearing anything that pleases him, he takes up his staff with both hands, and lays it upon the next piece of timber that stands in his way with exceeding vehemence: after which he composes himself in his former posture, till such time as something new sets him again at work.

It has been observed, his blow is so well timed, that the most judicious critic could never except against it.

As soon as any shining thought is expressed in the poet, or any uncommon grace appears in the actor, he smites the bench or wainscot. If the audience does not concur with him, he smites a second time; and if the audience is not yet awaked, looks round him with great wrath, and repeats the blow a third time, which never fails to produce the clap. He sometimes lets the audience begin the clap of themselves, and at the conclusion of their applause ratifies it with a single thwack.

He is of so great use to the play-house, that it is said a former director of it, upon his not being able to pay his attendance by reason of sickness, kept one in pay to officiate for him till such time as he recovered; but the person so employed, though he laid about him with incredible violence, did it in such wrong places, that the audience soon found out it was not their old friend the trunk-maker.

It has been remarked that he has not yet exerted himself with vigour this season. He sometimes plies at the opera; and upon Nicolini's first appearance, was said to have demolished three benches in the fury of his applause. He has broken half a dozen oaken plants upon Dogget,[1] and seldom goes away from a tragedy of Shakespeare without leaving the wainscot extremely shattered.

The players do not only connive at this his obstreperous approbation, but very cheerfully repair at

[1] Thomas Doggett, a popular actor in the reigns of William III., Queen Anne, and George I.

their own cost whatever damages he makes. They had once a thought of erecting a kind of wooden anvil for his use, that should be made of a very sounding plank, in order to render his strokes more deep and mellow; but as this might not have been distinguished from the music of a kettle-drum, the project was laid aside.

In the meanwhile, I cannot but take notice of the great use it is to an audience, that a person should thus preside over their heads, like the director of a concert, in order to awaken their attention and beat time to their applauses; or, to raise my simile, I have sometimes fancied the trunk-maker in the upper gallery to be like Virgil's ruler of the winds, seated upon the top of a mountain, who, when he struck his sceptre upon the side of it, roused an hurricane, and set the whole cavern in an uproar.

It is certain the trunk-maker has saved many a good play, and brought many a graceful actor into reputation, who would not otherwise have been taken notice of. It is very visible, as the audience is not a little abashed, if they find themselves betrayed into a clap, when their friend in the upper gallery does not come into it; so the actors do not value themselves upon the clap, but regard it as a mere *brutum fulmen*, or empty noise, when it has not the sound of the oaken plant in it. I know it has been given out by those who are enemies to the trunk-maker, that he has sometimes been bribed to be in the interest of a bad poet or a vicious player; but this is a surmise which has no foundation: his strokes are always just, and

his admonitions seasonable; he does not deal about his blows at random, but always hits the right nail upon the head. The inexpressible force wherewith he lays them on, sufficiently shows the evidence and strength of his conviction. His zeal for a good author is indeed outrageous, and breaks down every fence and partition, every board and plank, that stands within the expression of his applause.

As I do not care for terminating my thoughts in barren speculations, or in reports of pure matter of fact, without drawing something from them for the advantage of my countrymen, I shall take the liberty to make an humble proposal, that whenever the trunk-maker shall depart this life, or whenever he shall have lost the spring of his arm by sickness, old age, infirmity, or the like, some able-bodied critic should be advanced to this post, and have a competent salary settled on him for life, to be furnished with bamboos for operas, crab-tree cudgels for comedies, and oaken plants for tragedy, at the public expense. And to the end that this place should always be disposed of according to merit, I would have none preferred to it, who has not given convincing proofs both of a sound judgment and a strong arm, and who could not, upon occasion, either knock down an ox or write a comment upon Horace's *Art of Poetry*. In short, I would have him a due composition of Hercules and Apollo, and so rightly qualified for this important office, that the trunk-maker may not be missed by our posterity.

The Spectator, No. 235. Thursday, November 29, 1711.

LXXXVI

As in a Glass Darkly

Visu carentem magna pars veri latet.—SENEC. *in Oedip.*

IT is very reasonable to believe, that part of the pleasure which happy minds shall enjoy in a future state, will arise from an enlarged contemplation of the divine wisdom in the government of the world, and a discovery of the secret and amazing steps of Providence from the beginning to the end of time. Nothing seems to be an entertainment more adapted to the nature of man, if we consider that curiosity is one of the strongest and most lasting appetites implanted in us, and that admiration is one of our most pleasing passions; and what a perpetual succession of enjoyments will be afforded to both these, in a scene so large and various as shall then be laid open to our view in the society of superior spirits, who perhaps will join with us in so delightful a prospect!

It is not impossible, on the contrary, that part of the punishment of such as are excluded from bliss may consist not only in their being denied this privilege, but in having their appetites at the same time vastly increased, without any satisfaction afforded to them. In these, the vain pursuit of knowledge shall perhaps add to their infelicity, and bewilder them in labyrinths of error, darkness, distraction, and uncertainty of everything but their own evil state. Milton has thus

represented the fallen angels reasoning together in a kind of respite from their torments, and creating to themselves a new disquiet amidst their very amusements; he could not properly have described the sports of condemned spirits, without that cast of horror and melancholy he has so judiciously mingled with them.

> Others apart sat on a hill retired,
> In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
> Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
> Fixt fate, freewill, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

In our present condition, which is a middle state, our minds are, as it were, chequered with truth and falsehood; and as our faculties are narrow and our views imperfect, it is impossible but our curiosity must meet with many repulses. The business of mankind in this life being rather to act than to know, their portion of knowledge is dealt to them accordingly.

From hence it is, that the reason of the inquisitive has so long been exercised with difficulties, in accounting for the promiscuous distribution of good and evil to the virtuous and the wicked in this world. From hence come all those pathetical complaints of so many tragical events, which happen to the wise and the good; and of such surprising prosperity, which is often the lot of the guilty and the foolish, that reason is sometimes puzzled, and at a loss what to pronounce upon so mysterious a dispensation.

Plato expresses his abhorrence of some fables of the poets, which seem to reflect on the gods as the

authors of injustice; and lays it down as a principle, that whatever is permitted to befall a just man, whether poverty, sickness, or any of those things which seem to be evils, shall either in life or death conduce to his good. My reader will observe how agreeable this maxim is to what we find delivered by a greater authority. Seneca has written a discourse purposely on this subject, in which he takes pains, after the doctrine of the Stoics, to show that adversity is not in itself an evil; and mentions a notable saying of Demetrius, that nothing would be more unhappy than a man who had never known affliction. He compares prosperity to the indulgence of a fond mother to a child, which often proves his ruin; but the affection of the Divine Being to that of a wise father, who would have his sons exercised with labour, disappointment, and pain, that they may gather strength and improve their fortitude. On this occasion the philosopher rises into that celebrated sentiment, that there is not on earth a spectacle more worthy the regard of a Creator intent on his works, than a brave man superior to his sufferings; to which he adds, that it must be a pleasure to Jupiter himself to look down from heaven and see Cato amidst the ruins of his country preserving his integrity.

This thought will appear yet more reasonable, if we consider human life as a state of probation, and adversity as the post of honour in it, assigned often to the best and most select spirits.

But what I would chiefly insist on here, is, that

we are not at present in a proper situation to judge of the counsels by which Providence acts, since but little arrives at our knowledge, and even that little we discern imperfectly; or, according to the elegant figure in Holy Writ, "We see but in part, and as in a glass darkly." It is to be considered, that Providence in its economy regards the whole system of time and things together, so that we cannot discover the beautiful connexions between incidents which lie widely separated in time, and by losing so many links of the chain, our reasonings become broken and imperfect. Thus those parts of the moral world which have not an absolute, may yet have a relative beauty, in respect of some other parts concealed from us, but open to His eye before whom past, present, and to come are set together in one point of view; and those events, the permission of which seems now to accuse his goodness, may, in the consummation of things, both magnify his goodness and exalt his wisdom. And this is enough to check our presumption, since it is in vain to apply our measures of regularity to matters of which we know neither the antecedents nor the consequents, the beginning nor the end.

I shall relieve my readers from this abstracted thought, by relating here a Jewish tradition concerning Moses,[1] which seems to be a kind of parable, illustrating

[1] "Henry More's *Divine Dialogues*."—H. MORLEY. More was one of the English Platonists of the seventeenth century. A Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, he devoted his life, with remarkable singleness of purpose, to study and religious meditation, steadfastly refusing all offers of church preferment that would have obliged him to quit his beloved Cambridge, which

what I have last mentioned. That great prophet, it is said, was called up by a voice from heaven to the top of a mountain; where, in a conference with the Supreme Being, he was permitted to propose to him some questions concerning his administration of the universe. In the midst of this divine colloquy he was commanded to look down on the plain below. At the foot of the mountain there issued out a clear spring of water, at which a soldier alighted from his horse to drink. He was no sooner gone than a little boy came to the same place, and finding a purse of gold which the soldier had dropped, took it up and went away with it. Immediately after this came an infirm old man, weary with age and travelling, and having quenched his thirst, sat down to rest himself by the side of the spring. The soldier, missing his purse, returns to search for it, and demands it of the old man, who affirms he had not seen it, and appeals to heaven in witness of his innocence. The soldier, not believing his protestations, kills him. Moses fell on his face with horror and amazement, when the divine voice thus prevented his expostulation: "Be not surprised, Moses, nor ask why the Judge of the whole earth has suffered this thing to come to pass: the child is the occasion that the blood of the old man is spilt; but know, that the old man whom thou sawest, was the murderer of that child's father."

The Spectator, No. 237. Saturday, December 1, 1711.

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he called his paradise. His mystical poems were published during the great Civil War, the noise of which seems hardly to have penetrated to his quiet study.

LXXXVII

Methods of managing a Debate

—Bella, horrida bella !—VIRG.

I HAVE sometimes amused myself with considering the several methods of managing a debate, which have obtained in the world.

The first races of mankind used to dispute, as our ordinary people do nowadays, in a kind of wild logic, uncultivated by rules of art.

Socrates introduced a catechetical method of arguing. He would ask his adversary question upon question, till he had convinced him out of his own mouth that his opinions were wrong. This way of debating drives an enemy up into a corner, seizes all the passes through which he can make an escape, and forces him to surrender at discretion.

Aristotle changed this method of attack, and invented a great variety of little weapons, called syllogisms. As in the Socratic way of dispute you agree to everything which your opponent advances, in the Aristotelic you are still denying and contradicting some part or other of what he says. Socrates conquers you by stratagem, Aristotle by force: the one takes the town by sap, the other sword in hand.

The universities of Europe, for many years, carried on their debates by syllogism, insomuch that we see the knowledge of several centuries laid out into

objections and answers, and all the good sense of the age cut and minced into almost an infinitude of distinctions.

When our universities found that there was no end of wrangling this way, they invented a kind of argument, which is not reducible to any mood or figure in Aristotle. It was called the *Argumentum Basilinum* (others write it *Bacilinum* or *Baculinum*), which is pretty well expressed in our English word *club-law*. When they were not able to confute their antagonist, they knocked him down. It was their method, in these polemical debates, first to discharge their syllogisms, and afterwards to betake themselves to their clubs, till such time as they had one way or other confounded their gainsayers. There is in Oxford a narrow defile (to make use of a military term), where the partisans used to encounter, for which reason it still retains the name of "Logic Lane." I have heard an old gentleman, a physician, make his boasts, that when he was a young fellow he marched several times at the head of a troop of Scotists, and cudgelled a body of Smiglesians half the length of High Street, till they had dispersed themselves for shelter into their respective garrisons.

This humour, I find, went very far in Erasmus's time. For that author tells us, that upon the revival of Greek letters most of the universities in Europe were divided into Greeks and Trojans. The latter were those who bore a mortal enmity to the language of the Grecians, insomuch that if they met with any who understood it, they did not fail to treat him as a

foe. Erasmus himself had, it seems, the misfortune to fall into the hands of a party of Trojans, who laid him on with so many blows and buffets, that he never forgot their hostilities to his dying day.

There is a way of managing an argument not much unlike the former, which is made use of by states and communities, when they draw up a hundred thousand disputants on each side, and convince one another by dint of sword. A certain grand monarch was so sensible of his strength in this way of reasoning, that he writ upon his great guns—*Ratio ultima Regum*, "The Logic of Kings"; but, God be thanked, he is now pretty well baffled at his own weapons. When one has to do with a philosopher of this kind, one should remember the old gentleman's saying, who had been engaged in an argument with one of the Roman emperors. Upon his friend's telling him, that he wondered he would give up the question, when he had visibly the better of the dispute, "I am never ashamed," says he, "to be confuted by one who is master of fifty legions."

I shall but just mention another kind of reasoning, which may be called arguing by poll; and another which is of equal force, in which wagers are made use of as arguments, according to the celebrated line in *Hudibras*.

But the most notable way of managing a controversy, is that which we may call *arguing by torture*. This is a method of reasoning which has been made use of with the poor refugees, and which was so

fashionable in our country during the reign of Queen Mary, that in a passage of an author quoted by Monsieur Bayle, it is said the price of wood was raised in England by reason of the executions that were made in Smithfield. These disputants convince their adversaries with a *sorites*, commonly called a pile of faggots. The rack is also a kind of syllogism which has been used with good effect, and has made multitudes of converts. Men were formerly disputed out of their doubts, reconciled to truth by force of reason, and won over to opinions by the candour, sense, and ingenuity of those who had the right on their side; but this method of conviction operated too slowly. Pain was found to be much more enlightening than reason. Every scruple was looked upon as obstinacy, and not to be removed but by several engines invented for that purpose. In a word, the application of whips, racks, gibbets, galleys, dungeons, fire and faggot, in a dispute, may be looked upon as popish refinements upon the old heathen logic.

There is another way of reasoning which seldom fails, though it be of a quite different nature to that I have last mentioned. I mean, convincing a man by ready money, or, as it is ordinarily called, bribing a man to an opinion. This method has often proved successful, when all the others have been made use of to no purpose. A man who is furnished with arguments from the mint, will convince his antagonist much sooner than one who draws them from reason and philosophy. Gold is a wonderful clearer of the understanding: it

dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant; accommodates itself to the meanest capacities; silences the loud and clamorous, and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible. Philip of Macedon was a man of most invincible reason this way. He refuted by it all the wisdom of Athens, confounded their statesmen, struck their orators dumb, and at length argued them out of all their liberties.

Having here touched upon the several methods of disputing, as they have prevailed in different ages of the world, I shall very suddenly give my reader an account of the whole art of cavilling; which shall be a full and satisfactory answer to all such papers and pamphlets as have yet appeared against the SPECTATOR.

The Spectator, No. 239. Tuesday, December 4, 1711.

LXXXVIII

Women's Tongues

—Τῶν δ' ἀκάματος ῥέει αὐδὴ
ἐκ στομάτων ἡδεῖα. HES.

WE are told by some ancient authors, that Socrates was instructed in eloquence by a woman, whose name, if I am not mistaken, was Aspasia. I have indeed very often looked upon that art as the most proper for the female sex, and I think the universities would do well to consider, whether they should not fill the rhetoric chairs with she-professors.

It has been said in the praise of some men, that they

could talk whole hours together upon anything; but it must be owned to the honour of the other sex, that there are many among them who can talk whole hours together upon nothing. I have known a woman branch out into a long extempore dissertation upon the edging of a petticoat, and chide her servant for breaking a china cup in all the figures of rhetoric.

Were women admitted to plead in courts of judicature, I am persuaded they would carry the eloquence of the bar to greater heights than it has yet arrived at. If any one doubts this, let him but be present at those debates which frequently arise among the ladies of the British fishery.

The first kind, therefore, of female orators which I shall take notice of, are those who are employed in stirring up the passions, a part of rhetoric in which Socrates his wife had perhaps made a greater proficiency than his above-mentioned teacher.

The second kind of female orators are those who deal in invectives, and who are commonly known by the name of the censorious. The imagination and elocution of this set of rhetoricians is wonderful. With what a fluency of invention, and copiousness of expression, will they enlarge upon every little slip in the behaviour of another? With how many different circumstances, and with what variety of phrases, will they tell over the same story? I have known an old lady make an unhappy marriage the subject of a month's conversation. She blamed the bride in one place; pitied her in another; laughed at her in a third;

wondered at her in a fourth; was angry with her in a fifth; and in short, wore out a pair of coach-horses in expressing her concern for her. At length, after having quite exhausted the subject on this side, she made a visit to the new-married pair, praised the wife for the prudent choice she had made, told her the unreasonable reflections which some malicious people had cast upon her, and desired that they might be better acquainted. The censure and approbation of this kind of women are therefore only to be considered as helps to discourse.

A third kind of female orators may be comprehended under the word Gossips. Mrs. Fiddle Faddle is perfectly accomplished in this sort of eloquence; she launches out into descriptions of christenings, runs divisions upon an head-dress, knows every dish of meat that is served up in her neighbourhood, and entertains her company a whole afternoon together with the wit of her little boy, before he is able to speak.

The coquette may be looked upon as a fourth kind of female orator. To give herself the larger field for discourse, she hates and loves in the same breath, talks to her lap-dog or parrot, is uneasy in all kinds of weather, and in every part of the room: she has false quarrels and feigned obligations to all the men of her acquaintance; sighs when she is not sad, and laughs when she is not merry. The coquette is in particular a great mistress of that part of oratory which is called action, and indeed seems to speak for no other purpose,

but as it gives her an opportunity of stirring a limb or varying a feature, of glancing her eyes or playing with her fan.

As for newsmongers, politicians, mimics, story-tellers, with other characters of that nature, which give birth to loquacity, they are as commonly found among the men as the women; for which reason I shall pass them over in silence.

I have often been puzzled to assign a cause why women should have this talent of a ready utterance in so much greater perfection than men. I have sometimes fancied that they have not a retentive power, or the faculty of suppressing their thoughts, as men have, but that they are necessitated to speak everything they think; and if so, it would perhaps furnish a very strong argument to the Cartesians, for the supporting of their doctrine that the soul always thinks. But as several are of opinion that the fair sex are not altogether strangers to the art of dissembling and concealing their thoughts, I have been forced to relinquish that opinion, and have therefore endeavoured to seek after some better reason. In order to it, a friend of mine, who is an excellent anatomist, has promised me by the first opportunity to dissect a woman's tongue, and to examine whether there may not be in it certain juices which render it so wonderfully voluble or flippant, or whether the fibres of it may not be made up of a finer or more pliant thread, or whether there are not in it some particular muscles which dart it up and down by such

sudden glances and vibrations; or whether, in the last place, there may not be certain undiscovered channels running from the head and the heart to this little instrument of loquacity, and conveying into it a perpetual affluence of animal spirits. Nor must I omit the reason which *Hudibras* has given, why those who can talk on trifles speak with the greatest fluency; namely, that the tongue is like a race-horse, which runs the faster the lesser weight it carries.

Which of these reasons soever may be looked upon as the most probable, I think the Irishman's thought was very natural, who, after some hours' conversation with a female orator, told her that he believed her tongue was very glad when she was asleep, for that it had not a moment's rest all the while she was awake.

That excellent old ballad of *The Wanton Wife of Bath* has the following remarkable lines:

> I think, quoth Thomas, women's tongues
> Of aspen leaves are made.

And Ovid, though in the description of a very barbarous circumstance, tells us, that when the tongue of a beautiful female was cut out, and thrown upon the ground, it could not forbear muttering even in that posture:

> *—Comprehensam forcipe linguam*
> *Abstulit ense fero. Radix micat ultima linguae.*
> *Ipsa jacet, terraeque tremens immurmurat atrae;*
> *Utque salire solet mutilatae cauda colubrae,*
> *Palpitat.*

If a tongue would be talking without a mouth, what could it have done when it had all its organs of

speech and accomplices of sound about it? I might here mention the story of the pippin-woman, had not I some reason to look upon it as fabulous.

I must confess, I am so wonderfully charmed with the music of this little instrument, that I would by no means discourage it. All that I aim at by this dissertation is, to cure it of several disagreeable notes, and in particular of those little jarrings and dissonances which arise from anger, censoriousness, gossiping, and coquetry. In short, I would have it always tuned by good-nature, truth, discretion, and sincerity.

The Spectator, No. 247. Thursday, December 13, 1711.

LXXXIX

London Street Cries

—Linguae centum sunt, oraque centum,
Ferrea vox. VIRG.

THERE is nothing which more astonishes a foreigner, and frights a country squire, than the cries of London. My good friend Sir Roger often declares, that he cannot get them out of his head, or go to sleep for them, the first week that he is in town. On the contrary, Will Honeycomb calls them the *Ramage de la Ville*, and prefers them to the sounds of larks and nightingales, with all the music of the fields and woods. I have lately received a letter from some very odd fellow upon this subject, which I shall leave with my reader, without saying anything further of it.

"SIR—I am a man out of all business, and would willingly turn my head to anything for an honest livelihood. I have invented several projects for raising many millions of money without burdening the subject, but I cannot get the parliament to listen to me, who look upon me, forsooth, as a crack and a projector; so that, despairing to enrich either myself or my country by this public-spiritedness, I would make some proposals to you relating to a design which I have very much at heart, and which may procure me a handsome subsistence, if you will be pleased to recommend it to the cities of London and Westminster.

"The post I would aim at, is to be comptroller-general of the London cries, which are at present under no manner of rules or discipline. I think I am pretty well qualified for this place, as being a man of very strong lungs, of great insight into all the branches of our British trades and manufactures, and of a competent skill in music.

"The cries of London may be divided into vocal and instrumental. As for the latter, they are at present under a very great disorder. A freeman of London has the privilege of disturbing a whole street for an hour together, with the twanking of a brass kettle or a frying-pan. The watchman's thump at midnight startles us in our beds, as much as the breaking in of a thief. The sow-gelder's horn has indeed something musical in it, but this is seldom heard within the liberties. I would therefore propose, that no instru-

ment of this nature should be made use of, which I have not tuned and licensed, after having carefully examined in what manner it may affect the ears of Her Majesty's liege subjects.

" Vocal cries are of a much larger extent, and indeed so full of incongruities and barbarisms, that we appear a distracted city to foreigners, who do not comprehend the meaning of such enormous outcries. Milk is generally sold in a note above *ela*, and in sounds so exceeding shrill, that it often sets our teeth on edge. The chimney-sweeper is confined to no certain pitch; he sometimes utters himself in the deepest bass, and sometimes in the sharpest treble; sometimes in the highest, and sometimes in the lowest note of the gamut. The same observation might be made on the retailers of small coal, not to mention broken glasses or brick-dust. In these therefore, and the like cases, it should be my care to sweeten and mellow the voices of these itinerant tradesmen, before they make their appearance in our streets, as also to accommodate their cries to their respective wares; and to take care in particular, that those may not make the most noise who have the least to sell, which is very observable in the venders of card-matches, to whom I cannot but apply that old proverb of *Much cry, but little wool.*

" Some of these last-mentioned musicians are so very loud in the sale of these trifling manufactures, that an honest splenetic gentleman of my acquaintance bargained with one of them never to come into the street where he lived; but what was the effect of this

contract? why, the whole tribe of card-match-makers which frequent that quarter, passed by his door the very next day, in hopes of being bought off after the same manner.

"It is another great imperfection in our London cries, that there is no just time nor measure observed in them. Our news should indeed be published in a very quick time, because it is a commodity that will not keep cold. It should not, however, be cried with the same precipitation as *Fire*: yet this is generally the case. A bloody battle alarms the town from one end to another in an instant. Every motion of the French is published in so great a hurry, that one would think the enemy were at our gates. This likewise I would take upon me to regulate in such a manner, that there should be some distinction made between the spreading of a victory, a march, or an encampment, a Dutch, a Portugal, or a Spanish mail. Nor must I omit, under this head, those excessive alarms with which several boisterous rustics infest our streets in turnip season; and which are more inexcusable, because these are wares which are in no danger of cooling upon their hands.

"There are others who affect a very slow time, and are, in my opinion, much more tuneable than the former; the cooper in particular swells his last note in an hollow voice, that is not without its harmony; nor can I forbear being inspired with a most agreeable melancholy, when I hear that sad and solemn air with which the public are very often asked, if they have

any chairs to mend? Your own memory may suggest to you many other lamentable ditties of the same nature, in which the music is wonderfully languishing and melodious.

"I am always pleased with that particular time of the year which is proper for the pickling of dill and cucumbers; but alas! this cry, like the song of the nightingale, is not heard above two months. It would therefore be worth while to consider, whether the same air might not in some cases be adapted to other words.

"It might likewise deserve our most serious consideration, how far, in a well-regulated city, those humourists are to be tolerated, who, not contented with the traditional cries of their forefathers, have invented particular songs and tunes of their own: such as was, not many years since, the pastry-man, commonly known by the name of the colly-molly-puff; and such as is at this day the vender of powder and washballs, who, if I am rightly informed, goes under the name of Powder Watt.

"I must not here omit one particular absurdity which runs through this whole vociferous generation, and which renders their cries very often not only incommodious, but altogether useless to the public: I mean, that idle accomplishment which they all of them aim at, of crying so as not to be understood. Whether or no they have learned this from several of our affected singers, I will not take upon me to say; but most certain it is, that people know the wares they deal in rather by their tunes than by their

words; insomuch that I have sometimes seen a country boy run out to buy apples of a bellows-mender, and gingerbread from a grinder of knives and scissors. Nay, so strangely infatuated are some very eminent artists of this particular grace in a cry, that none but their acquaintance are able to guess at their profession; for who else can know that 'Work if I had it' should be the signification of a corn-cutter?

"Forasmuch therefore as persons of this rank are seldom men of genius or capacity, I think it would be very proper, that some man of good sense and sound judgment should preside over these public cries, who should permit none to lift up their voices in our streets, that have not tuneable throats, and are not only able to overcome the noise of the crowd and the rattling of coaches, but also to vend their respective merchandises in apt phrases, and in the most distinct and agreeable sounds. I do therefore humbly recommend myself as a person rightly qualified for this post; and if I meet with fitting encouragement, shall communicate some other projects which I have by me, that may no less conduce to the emolument of the public.—I am, sir, etc., RALPH CROTCHET."

The Spectator, No. 251. Tuesday, December 18, 1711.

XC

The Love of Fame

Laudis amore tumes? sunt certa piacula, quae te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello. HOR.

THE soul, considered abstractedly from its passions, is of a remiss and sedentary nature, slow in its resolves, and languishing in its executions. The use therefore of the passions is to stir it up, and to put it upon action, to awaken the understanding, to enforce the will, and to make the whole man more vigorous and attentive in the prosecution of his designs. As this is the end of the passions in general, so it is particularly of ambition, which pushes the soul to such actions as are apt to procure honour and reputation to the actor. But if we carry our reflections higher, we may discover further ends of Providence in implanting this passion in mankind.

It was necessary for the world, that arts should be invented and improved, books written and transmitted to posterity, nations conquered and civilized: now since the proper and genuine motives to these and the like great actions would only influence virtuous minds, there would be but small improvements in the world, were there not some common principle of action working equally with all men. And such a principle is ambition or a desire of fame, by which great endowments are not suffered to lie idle and useless to the

public, and many vicious men overreached, as it were, and engaged contrary to their natural inclinations in a glorious and laudable course of action. For we may further observe, that men of the greatest abilities are most fired with ambition, and that, on the contrary, mean and narrow minds are the least actuated by it; whether it be that a man's sense of his own incapacities makes him despair of coming at fame, or that he has not enough range of thought to look out for any good which does not more immediately relate to his interest or convenience, or that Providence, in the very frame of his soul, would not subject him to such a passion as would be useless to the world and a torment to himself.

Were not this desire of fame very strong, the difficulty of obtaining it, and the danger of losing it when obtained, would be sufficient to deter a man from so vain a pursuit.

How few are there who are furnished with abilities sufficient to recommend their actions to the admiration of the world, and to distinguish themselves from the rest of mankind! Providence for the most part sets us upon a level, and observes a kind of proportion in its dispensations towards us. If it renders us perfect in one accomplishment, it generally leaves us defective in another, and seems careful rather of preserving every person from being mean and deficient in his qualifications, than of making any single one eminent or extraordinary.

And among those who are the most richly endowed

by nature, and accomplished by their own industry, how few are there whose virtues are not obscured by the ignorance, prejudice, or envy of their beholders! Some men cannot discern between a noble and a mean action. Others are apt to attribute them to some false end or intention; and others purposely misrepresent or put a wrong interpretation on them.

But the more to enforce this consideration, we may observe that those are generally most unsuccessful in their pursuit after fame, who are most desirous of obtaining it. It is Sallust's remark upon Cato, that the less he coveted glory, the more he acquired it.

Men take an ill-natured pleasure in crossing our inclinations, and disappointing us in what our hearts are most set upon. When therefore they have discovered the passionate desire of fame in the ambitious man (as no temper of mind is more apt to show itself), they become sparing and reserved in their commendations, they envy him the satisfaction of an applause, and look on their praises rather as a kindness done to his person, than as a tribute paid to his merit. Others, who are free from this natural perverseness of temper, grow wary in their praises of one who sets too great a value on them, lest they should raise him too high in his own imagination, and by consequence remove him to a greater distance from themselves.

But further, this desire of fame naturally betrays the ambitious man into such indecencies as are a lessening to his reputation. He is still afraid lest any of his actions should be thrown away in private, lest

his deserts should be concealed from the notice of the world, or receive any disadvantage from the reports which others make of them. This often sets him on empty boasts and ostentations of himself, and betrays him into vain fantastic recitals of his own performances: his discourse generally leans one way, and whatever is the subject of it, tends obliquely either to the detracting from others, or to the extolling of himself. Vanity is the natural weakness of an ambitious man, which exposes him to the secret scorn and derision of those he converses with, and ruins the character he is so industrious to advance by it. For though his actions are never so glorious, they lose their lustre when they are drawn at large and set to show by his own hand; and as the world is more apt to find fault than to commend, the boast will probably be censured when the great action that occasioned it is forgotten.

Besides, this very desire of fame is looked on as a meanness and imperfection in the greatest character. A solid and substantial greatness of soul looks down with a generous neglect on the censures and applauses of the multitude, and places a man beyond the little noise and strife of tongues. Accordingly we find in ourselves a secret awe and veneration for the character of one who moves above us in a regular and illustrious course of virtue, without any regard to our good or ill opinions of him, to our reproaches or commendations. As on the contrary it is usual for us, when we would take off from

the fame and reputation of an action, to ascribe it to vainglory and a desire of fame in the actor. Nor is this common judgment and opinion of mankind ill founded; for certainly it denotes no great bravery of mind to be worked up to any noble action by so selfish a motive, and to do that out of a desire of fame, which we could not be prompted to by a disinterested love to mankind, or by a generous passion for the glory of Him that made us.

Thus is fame a thing difficult to be obtained by all, but particularly by those who thirst after it, since most men have so much either of ill-nature or of wariness, as not to gratify or soothe the vanity of the ambitious man, and since this very thirst after fame naturally betrays him into such indecencies as are a lessening to his reputation, and is itself looked upon as a weakness in the greatest characters.

In the next place, fame is easily lost, and as difficult to be preserved as it was at first to be acquired. But this I shall make the subject of the following paper.

The Spectator, No. 255. Saturday, December 22, 1711.

XCI

The Vanity of Fame

Φήμη γάρ τε κακὴ πέλεται· κούφη μὲν ἀεῖραι
ῥεῖα μάλ', ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν. HES.

THERE are many passions and tempers of mind which naturally dispose us to depress and vilify the merit of

one rising in the esteem of mankind. All those who made their entrance into the world with the same advantages, and were once looked on as his equals, are apt to think the fame of his merits a reflection on their own indeserts; and will therefore take care to reproach him with the scandal of some past action, or derogate from the worth of the present, that they may still keep him on the same level with themselves. The like kind of consideration often stirs up the envy of such as were once his superiors, who think it a detraction from their merit to see another get ground upon them and overtake them in the pursuits of glory; and will therefore endeavour to sink his reputation, that they may the better preserve their own. Those who were once his equals envy and defame him, because they now see him their superior; and those who were once his superiors, because they look upon him as their equal.

But further, a man whose extraordinary reputation thus lifts him up to the notice and observation of mankind, draws a multitude of eyes upon him that will narrowly inspect every part of him, consider him nicely in all views, and not be a little pleased when they have taken him in the worst and most disadvantageous light. There are many who find a pleasure in contradicting the common reports of fame, and in spreading abroad the weaknesses of an exalted character. They publish their ill-natured discoveries with a secret pride, and applaud themselves for the singularity of their judgment, which

has searched deeper than others, detected what the rest of the world have overlooked, and found a flaw in what the generality of mankind admires. Others there are who proclaim the errors and infirmities of a great man with an inward satisfaction and complacency, if they discover none of the like errors and infirmities in themselves; for while they are exposing another's weaknesses, they are tacitly aiming at their own commendations, who are not subject to the like infirmities, and are apt to be transported with a secret kind of vanity to see themselves superior in some respects to one of a sublime and celebrated reputation. Nay, it very often happens, that none are more industrious in publishing the blemishes of an extraordinary reputation, than such as lie open to the same censures in their own characters, as either hoping to excuse their own defects by the authority of so high an example, or raising an imaginary applause to themselves for resembling a person of an exalted reputation, though in the blameable parts of his character. If all these secret springs of detraction fail, yet very often a vain ostentation of wit sets a man on attacking an established name, and sacrificing it to the mirth and laughter of those about him. A satire or a libel on one of the common stamp, never meets with that reception and approbation among its readers, as what is aimed at a person whose merit places him upon an eminence and gives him a more conspicuous figure among men. Whether it be that we think it shows greater art to expose and turn to

ridicule a man whose character seems so improper a subject for it, or that we are pleased by some implicit kind of revenge to see him taken down and humbled in his reputation, and in some measure reduced to our own rank, who had so far raised himself above us in the reports and opinions of mankind.

Thus we see how many dark and intricate motives there are to detraction and defamation, and how many malicious spies are searching into the actions of a great man, who is not always the best prepared for so narrow an inspection. For we may generally observe, that our admiration of a famous man lessens upon our nearer acquaintance with him; and that we seldom hear the description of a celebrated person, without a catalogue of some notorious weaknesses and infirmities. The reason may be, because any little slip is more conspicuous and observable in his conduct than in another's, as it is not of a piece with the rest of his character, or because it is impossible for a man at the same time to be attentive to the more important part of his life, and to keep a watchful eye over all the inconsiderable circumstances of his behaviour and conversation; or because, as we have before observed, the same temper of mind which inclines us to a desire of fame, naturally betrays us into such slips and unwarinesses as are not incident to men of a contrary disposition.

After all it must be confessed, that a noble and triumphant merit often breaks through and dissipates these little spots and sullies in its reputation; but

if by a mistaken pursuit after fame, or through human infirmity, any false step be made in the more momentous concerns of life, the whole scheme of ambitious designs is broken and disappointed. The smaller stains and blemishes may die away and disappear amidst the brightness that surrounds them; but a blot of a deeper nature casts a shade on all the other beauties, and darkens the whole character. How difficult therefore is it to preserve a great name, when he that has acquired it is so obnoxious to such little weaknesses and infirmities as are no small diminution to it when discovered, especially when they are so industriously proclaimed and aggravated by such as were once his superiors or equals, by such as would set to show their judgment or their wit, and by such as are guilty or innocent of the same slips or misconducts in their own behaviour!

But were there none of these dispositions in others to censure a famous man, nor any such miscarriages in himself, yet would he meet with no small trouble in keeping up his reputation in all its height and splendour. There must be always a noble train of actions to preserve his fame in life and motion. For when it is once at a stand, it naturally flags and languishes. Admiration is a very short-lived passion, that immediately decays upon growing familiar with its object, unless it be still fed with fresh discoveries, and kept alive by a new perpetual succession of miracles rising up to its view. And even the greatest actions of a

celebrated person labour under this disadvantage, that however surprising and extraordinary they may be, they are no more than what are expected from him; but on the contrary, if they fall anything below the opinion that is conceived of him, though they might raise the reputation of another, they are a diminution to his.

One would think there should be something wonderfully pleasing in the possession of fame, that, notwithstanding all these mortifying considerations, can engage a man in so desperate a pursuit; and yet if we consider the little happiness that attends a great character, and the multitude of disquietudes to which the desire of it subjects an ambitious mind, one would be still the more surprised to see so many restless candidates for glory.

Ambition raises a secret tumult in the soul, it inflames the mind, and puts it into a violent hurry of thought: it is still reaching after an empty imaginary good, that has not in it the power to abate or satisfy it. Most other things we long for can allay the cravings of their proper sense, and for a while set the appetite at rest; but fame is a good so wholly foreign to our natures, that we have no faculty in the soul adapted to it, nor any organ in the body to relish it; an object of desire placed out of the possibility of fruition. It may indeed fill the mind for a while with a giddy kind of pleasure, but it is such a pleasure as makes a man restless and uneasy under it; and which does not so

much satisfy the present thirst, as it excites fresh desires, and sets the soul on new enterprises. For how few ambitious men are there, who have got as much fame as they desired, and whose thirst after it has not been as eager in the very height of their reputation, as it was before they became known and eminent among men! There is not any circumstance in Caesar's character which gives me a greater idea of him, than a saying which Cicero tells us he frequently made use of in private conversation, "That he was satisfied with his share of life and fame," *Se satis vel ad naturam, vel ad gloriam vixisse.* Many indeed have given over their pursuits after fame, but that has proceeded either from the disappointments they have met in it, or from their experience of the little pleasure which attends it, or from the better informations or natural coldness of old age, but seldom from a full satisfaction and acquiescence in their present enjoyments of it.

Nor is fame only unsatisfying in itself, but the desire of it lays us open to many accidental troubles, which those are free from who have no such a tender regard for it. How often is the ambitious man cast down and disappointed, if he receives no praise where he expected it! Nay, how often is he mortified with the very praises he receives, if they do not rise so high as he thinks they ought, which they seldom do, unless increased by flattery, since few men have so good an opinion of us as we have of ourselves! But if the ambitious man can be so much grieved even with

praise itself, how will he be able to bear up under scandal and defamation? For the same temper of mind which makes him desire fame, makes him hate reproach. If he can be transported with the extraordinary praises of men, he will be as much dejected by their censures. How little therefore is the happiness of an ambitious man, who gives every one a dominion over it, who thus subjects himself to the good or ill speeches of others, and puts it in the power of every malicious tongue to throw him into a fit of melancholy, and destroy his natural rest and repose of mind! Especially when we consider that the world is more apt to censure than applaud, and himself fuller of imperfections than virtues.

We may further observe, that such a man will be more grieved for the loss of fame, than he could have been pleased with the enjoyment of it. For though the presence of this imaginary good cannot make us happy, the absence of it may make us miserable; because in the enjoyment of an object we only find that share of pleasure which it is capable of giving us, but in the loss of it we do not proportion our grief to the real value it bears, but to the value our fancies and imaginations set upon it.

So inconsiderable is the satisfaction that fame brings along with it, and so great the disquietudes to which it makes us liable. The desire of it stirs up very uneasy motions in the mind, and is rather inflamed than satisfied by the presence of the thing desired. The enjoyment of it brings but very little pleasure,

though the loss or want of it be very sensible and afflicting; and even this little happiness is so very precarious, that it wholly depends on the will of others. We are not only tortured by the reproaches which are offered us, but are disappointed by the silence of men when it is unexpected, and humbled even by their praises.

The Spectator, No. 256. Monday, December 24, 1711.

XCII

The Spectator's Self-Denial

Nulla venenato littera mista joco est.—OVID.

I THINK myself highly obliged to the public for their kind acceptance of a paper which visits them every morning, and has in it none of those seasonings that recommend so many of the writings which are in vogue among us.

As, on the one side, my paper has not in it a single word of news, a reflection in politics, nor a stroke of party; so, on the other, there are no fashionable touches of infidelity, no obscene ideas, no satires upon priesthood, marriage, and the like popular topics of ridicule; no private scandal, nor anything that may tend to the defamation of particular persons, families, or societies.

There is not one of these above-mentioned subjects that would not sell a very indifferent paper, could I think of gratifying the public by such mean and base

methods. But, notwithstanding I have rejected everything that savours of party, everything that is loose and immoral, and everything that might create uneasiness in the minds of particular persons, I find that the demand for my papers has increased every month since their first appearance in the world. This does not perhaps reflect so much honour upon myself as on my readers, who give a much greater attention to discourses of virtue and morality, than ever I expected, or indeed could hope.

When I broke loose from that great body of writers who have employed their wit and parts in propagating vice and irreligion, I did not question but I should be treated as an odd kind of fellow that had a mind to appear singular in my way of writing; but the general reception I have found, convinces me that the world is not so corrupt as we are apt to imagine; and that if those men of parts who have been employed in vitiating the age had endeavoured to rectify and amend it, they needed not have sacrificed their good sense and virtue to their fame and reputation. No man is so sunk in vice and ignorance, but there are still some hidden seeds of goodness and knowledge in him, which give him a relish of such reflections and speculations as have an aptness to improve the mind and make the heart better.

I have shown in a former paper, with how much care I have avoided all such thoughts as are loose, obscene, or immoral; and I believe my reader would still think the better of me, if he knew the pains I

am at in qualifying what I write after such a manner, that nothing may be interpreted as aimed at private persons. For this reason, when I draw any faulty character, I consider all those persons to whom the malice of the world may possibly apply it, and take care to dash it with such particular circumstances as may prevent all such ill-natured applications. If I write anything on a black man, I run over in my mind all the eminent persons in the nation who are of that complexion: when I place an imaginary name at the head of a character, I examine every syllable and letter of it, that it may not bear any resemblance to one that is real. I know very well the value which every man sets upon his reputation, and how painful it is to be exposed to the mirth and derision of the public, and should therefore scorn to divert my reader at the expense of any private man.

As I have been thus tender of every particular person's reputation, so I have taken more than ordinary care not to give offence to those who appear in the higher figures of life. I would not make myself merry even with a piece of pasteboard that is invested with a public character; for which reason I have never glanced upon the late designed procession of his Holiness and his attendants, notwithstanding it might have afforded matter to many ludicrous speculations. Among those advantages which the public may reap from this paper, it is not the least, that it draws men's minds off from the bitterness of party, and furnishes them with subjects of discourse that may be treated

without warmth or passion. This is said to have been the first design of those gentlemen who set on foot the Royal Society; and had then a very good effect, as it turned many of the greatest geniuses of that age to the disquisitions of natural knowledge, who, if they had engaged in politics with the same parts and application, might have set their country in a flame. The air-pump, the barometer, the quadrant, and the like inventions, were thrown out to those busy spirits, as tubs and barrels are to a whale, that he may let the ship sail on without disturbance, while he diverts himself with those innocent amusements.

I have been so very scrupulous in this particular of not hurting any man's reputation, that I have forborne mentioning even such authors as I could not name with honour. This I must confess to have been a piece of very great self-denial; for as the public relishes nothing better than the ridicule which turns upon a writer of any eminence, so there is nothing which a man that has but a very ordinary talent in ridicule may execute with greater ease. One might raise laughter for a quarter of a year together upon the works of a person who has published but a very few volumes. For which reason I am astonished, that those who have appeared against this paper have made so very little of it. The criticisms which I have hitherto published, have been made with an intention rather to discover beauties and excellencies in the writers of my own time, than to publish any of their faults and imperfections. In the meanwhile I should take it for a very

great favour from some of my underhand detractors, if they would break all measures with me so far, as to give me a pretence for examining their performances with an impartial eye; nor shall I look upon it as any breach of charity to criticize the author, so long as I keep clear of the person.

In the meanwhile, till I am provoked to such hostilities, I shall from time to time endeavour to do justice to those who have distinguished themselves in the politer parts of learning, and to point out such beauties in their works as may have escaped the observation of others.

As the first place among our English poets is due to Milton, and as I have drawn more quotations out of him than from any other, I shall enter into a regular criticism upon his *Paradise Lost*, which I shall publish every Saturday till I have given my thoughts upon that poem. I shall not however presume to impose upon others my own particular judgment on this author, but only deliver it as my private opinion. Criticism is of a very large extent, and every particular master in this art has his favourite passages in an author, which do not equally strike the best judges. It will be sufficient for me if I discover many beauties or imperfections which others have not attended to, and I should be very glad to see any of our eminent writers publish their discoveries on the same subject. In short, I would always be understood to write my papers of criticism in the spirit which Horace has expressed in those two famous lines:

—Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.

"If you have made any better remarks of your own, communicate them with candour; if not, make use of these I present you with."

The Spectator, No. 262. Monday, December 31, 1711.

XCIII

Ladies' Hoods

Dixerit e multis aliquis, Quid virus in angues
Adjicis? et rabidae tradis ovile lupae?
OVID, *de Art. Am.*

ONE of the Fathers, if I am rightly informed, has defined a woman to be ζῶον φιλοκόσμον, "An animal that delights in finery." I have already treated of the sex in two or three papers, conformably to this definition, and have in particular observed, that in all ages they have been more careful than the men to adorn that part of the head which we generally call the outside.

This observation is so very notorious, that when in ordinary discourse we say a man has a fine head, a long head, or a good head, we express ourselves metaphorically, and speak in relation to his understanding; whereas when we say of a woman, she has a fine, a long, or a good head, we speak only in relation to her commode.

It is observed among birds, that nature has lavished

all her ornaments upon the male, who very often appears in a most beautiful head-dress; whether it be a crest, a comb, a tuft of feathers, or a natural little plume, erected like a kind of pinnacle on the very top of the head. As nature, on the contrary, has poured out her charms in the greatest abundance upon the female part of our species, so they are very assiduous in bestowing upon themselves the finest garnitures of art. The peacock, in all his pride, does not display half the colours that appear in the garments of a British lady, when she is dressed either for a ball or a birthday.

But to return to our female heads. The ladies have been for some time in a kind of moulting season with regard to that part of their dress, having cast great quantities of ribbon, lace, and cambric, and in some measure reduced that part of the human figure to the beautiful globular form which is natural to it. We have for a great while expected what kind of ornament would be substituted in the place of those antiquated commodes. But our female projectors were all the last summer so taken up with the improvement of their petticoats, that they had not time to attend to anything else; but having at length sufficiently adorned their lower parts, they now begin to turn their thoughts upon the other extremity, as well remembering the old kitchen proverb, that if you light your fire at both ends, the middle will shift for itself.

I am engaged in this speculation by a sight which I lately met with at the opera. As I was standing in

the hinder part of the box, I took notice of a little cluster of women sitting together in the prettiest coloured hoods that I ever saw. One of them was blue, another yellow, and another philomot;[1] the fourth was of a pink colour, and the fifth of a pale green. I looked with as much pleasure upon this little party-coloured assembly as upon a bed of tulips, and did not know at first whether it might not be an embassy of Indian queens; but upon my going about into the pit and taking them in front, I was immediately undeceived, and saw so much beauty in every face, that I found them all to be English. Such eyes and lips, cheeks and foreheads, could be the growth of no other country. The complexion of their faces hindered me from observing any further the colour of their hoods, though I could easily perceive by that unspeakable satisfaction which appeared in their looks, that their own thoughts were wholly taken up on those pretty ornaments they wore upon their heads.

I am informed that this fashion spreads daily, insomuch that the Whig and Tory ladies begin already to hang out different colours, and to show their principles in their head-dress. Nay, if I may believe my friend Will Honeycomb, there is a certain old coquette of his acquaintance who intends to appear very suddenly in a rainbow hood, like the Iris in Dryden's *Virgil*, not questioning but that among such a variety of colours she shall have a charm for every heart.

[1] "*Feuille morte*, the russet yellow of dead leaves."—H. MORLEY.

My friend Will, who very much values himself upon his great insights into gallantry, tells me, that he can already guess at the humour a lady is in by her hood, as the courtiers of Morocco know the disposition of their present emperor by the colour of the dress which he puts on. When Melesinda wraps her head in flame colour, her heart is set upon execution. When she covers it with purple, I would not, says he, advise her lover to approach her; but if she appears in white, it is peace, and he may hand her out of her box with safety.

Will informs me likewise, that these hoods may be used as signals. Why else, says he, does Cornelia always put on a black hood when her husband is gone into the country?

Such are my friend Honeycomb's dreams of gallantry. For my own part, I impute this diversity of colours in the hoods to the diversity of complexion in the faces of my pretty countrywomen. Ovid, in his *Art of Love*, has given some precepts as to this particular, though I find they are different from those which prevail among the moderns. He recommends a red striped silk to the pale complexion, white to the brown, and dark to the fair. On the contrary, my friend Will, who pretends to be a greater master in this art than Ovid, tells me, that the palest features look the most agreeable in white sarsenet, that a face which is over-flushed appears to advantage in the deepest scarlet, and that the darkest complexion is not a little alleviated by a black hood.

In short, he is for losing the colour of the face in that of the hood, as a fire burns dimly, and a candle goes half out, in the light of the sun. This, says he, your Ovid himself has hinted, where he treats of these matters, when he tells us that the blue water-nymphs are dressed in sky-coloured garments; and that Aurora, who always appears in the light of the rising sun, is robed in saffron.

Whether these his observations are justly grounded I cannot tell; but I have often known him, as we have stood together behind the ladies, praise or dispraise the complexion of a face which he never saw, from observing the colour of her hood, and has been very seldom out in these his guesses.

As I have nothing more at heart than the honour and improvement of the fair sex, I cannot conclude this paper without an exhortation to the British ladies, that they would excel the women of all other nations as much in virtue and good sense as they do in beauty; which they may certainly do, if they will be as industrious to cultivate their minds, as they are to adorn their bodies: in the meanwhile I shall recommend to their most serious consideration the saying of an old Greek poet,

Γυναικὶ κόσμος ὁ τρόπος, κ' οὐ χρυσία.

The Spectator, No. 265. Thursday, January 3. 1712.

XCIV

Sir Roger de Coverley in Town

—Aevo rarissima nostro
Simplicitas. OVID.

I WAS this morning surprised with a great knocking at the door, when my landlady's daughter came up to me, and told me, there was a man below desired to speak with me. Upon my asking her who it was, she told me it was a very grave elderly person, but that she did not know his name. I immediately went down to him, and found him to be the coachman of my worthy friend Sir Roger de Coverley. He told me that his master came to town last night, and would be glad to take a turn with me in Gray's-Inn walks. As I was wondering in myself what had brought Sir Roger to town, not having lately received any letter from him, he told me that his master was come up to get a sight of Prince Eugene, and that he desired I would immediately meet him.

I was not a little pleased with the curiosity of the old knight, though I did not much wonder at it, having heard him say more than once in private discourse, that he looked upon Prince Eugenio (for so the knight always calls him) to be a greater man than Scanderbeg.[1]

[1] Early in January 1712 Prince Eugene of Savoy came to London in order to induce the Tory Ministry to prosecute with vigour the war which their predecessors the Whig ministry had waged for many years against the overweening ambition of Louis XIV. He was received with the honour due to him for the great services he had rendered to the Allies, but his mission failed of its purpose.

I was no sooner come into Gray's-Inn walks, but I heard my friend upon the terrace hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigour, for he loves to clear his pipes in good air (to make use of his own phrase), and is not a little pleased with any one who takes notice of the strength which he still exerts in his morning hems.

I was touched with a secret joy at the sight of the good old man, who before he saw me was engaged in conversation with a beggar-man that had asked an alms of him. I could hear my friend chide him for not finding out some work; but at the same time saw him put his hand in his pocket and give him sixpence.

Our salutations were very hearty on both sides, consisting of many kind shakes of the hand, and several affectionate looks which we cast upon one another. After which the knight told me my good friend his chaplain was very well, and much at my service, and that the Sunday before he had made a most incomparable sermon out of Doctor Barrow. "I have left," says he, "all my affairs in his hands, and being willing to lay an obligation upon him, have deposited with him thirty marks, to be distributed among his poor parishioners."

He then proceeded to acquaint me with the welfare of Will Wimble. Upon which he put his hand into his fob, and presented me in his name with a tobacco-stopper, telling me that Will had been busy all the beginning of the winter in turning great quantities of them; and that he made a present of one to every gentleman in the country who has good principles, and

smokes. He added, that poor Will was at present under great tribulation, for that Tom Touchy had taken the law of him for cutting some hazel sticks out of one of his hedges.

Among other pieces of news which the knight brought from his country seat, he informed me that Moll White was dead; and that about a month after her death the wind was so very high, that it blew down the end of one of his barns. "But for my part," says Sir Roger, "I do not think that the old woman had any hand in it."

He afterwards fell into an account of the diversions which had passed in his house during the holidays; for Sir Roger, after the laudable custom of his ancestors, always keeps open house at Christmas. I learned from him that he had killed eight fat hogs for this season, that he had dealt about his chines very liberally amongst his neighbours, and that in particular he had sent a string of hog's puddings with a pack of cards to every poor family in the parish. "I have often thought," says Sir Roger, "it happens very well that Christmas should fall out in the middle of winter. It is the most dead uncomfortable time of the year, when the poor people would suffer very much from their poverty and cold, if they had not good cheer, warm fires, and Christmas gambols to support them. I love to rejoice their poor hearts at this season, and to see the whole village merry in my great hall. I allow a double quantity of malt to my small beer, and set it a running for twelve days to every one that calls

for it. I have always a piece of cold beef and a mince-pie upon the table, and am wonderfully pleased to see my tenants pass away a whole evening in playing their innocent tricks, and smutting one another. Our friend Will Wimble is as merry as any of them, and shows a thousand roguish tricks upon these occasions."

I was very much delighted with the reflection of my old friend, which carried so much goodness in it. He then launched out into the praise of the late act of parliament for securing the Church of England,[1] and told me, with great satisfaction, that he believed it already began to take effect; for that a rigid Dissenter, who chanced to dine at his house on Christmas Day, had been observed to eat very plentifully of his plum-porridge.

After having dispatched all our country matters, Sir Roger made several inquiries concerning the club, and particularly of his old antagonist Sir Andrew Freeport. He asked me with a kind of smile, whether Sir Andrew had not taken the advantage of his absence to vent among them some of his republican doctrines; but soon after gathering up his countenance into a more than ordinary seriousness, "Tell me truly," says he, "don't you think Sir Andrew had a hand in the pope's procession"——but without giving me time to answer him, "Well, well," says he, "I know you are a wary man, and do not care to talk of public matters."

[1] The Act against Occasional Conformity, passed in 1711. It subjected to severe penalties any officer, civil or military, or any magistrate, who was convicted of attending a Dissenting place of worship.

The knight then asked me, if I had seen Prince Eugenio, and made me promise to get him a stand in some convenient place where he might have a full sight of that extraordinary man, whose presence does so much honour to the British nation. He dwelt very long on the praises of this great general, and I found that, since I was with him in the country, he had drawn many observations together out of his reading in Baker's *Chronicle* and other authors, who always lie in his hall window, which very much redound to the honour of this prince.

Having passed away the greatest part of the morning in hearing the knight's reflections, which were partly private and partly political, he asked me if I would smoke a pipe with him over a dish of coffee at Squire's. As I love the old man, I take delight in complying with everything that is agreeable to him, and accordingly waited on him to the coffee-house, where his venerable figure drew upon us the eyes of the whole room. He had no sooner seated himself at the upper end of the high table, but he called for a clean pipe, a paper of tobacco, a dish of coffee, a wax candle, and the *Supplement*, with such an air of cheerfulness and good humour, that all the boys in the coffee-room (who seemed to take pleasure in serving him) were at once employed on his several errands, insomuch that nobody else could come at a dish of tea, till the knight had got all his conveniences about him.

The Spectator, No. 269. Tuesday, January 8, 1712.

XCV

The Spectator's Letter-Bag

Mille trahens varios adverso sole colores.—VIRG.

I RECEIVE a double advantage from the letters of my correspondents, first, as they show me which of my papers are most acceptable to them; and in the next place, as they furnish me with materials for new speculations. Sometimes indeed I do not make use of the letter itself, but form the hints of it into plans of my own invention; sometimes I take the liberty to change the language or thought into my own way of speaking and thinking, and always (if it can be done without prejudice to the sense) omit the many compliments and applauses which are usually bestowed upon me.

Besides the two advantages above-mentioned, which I receive from the letters that are sent me, they give me an opportunity of lengthening out my paper by the skilful management of the subscribing part at the end of them, which perhaps does not a little conduce to the ease both of myself and reader.

Some will have it, that I often write to myself, and am the only punctual correspondent I have. This objection would indeed be material, were the letters I communicate to the public stuffed with my own commendations, and if, instead of endeavouring to divert or instruct my readers, I admired in them the beauty of my own performances. But I shall leave

these wise conjecturers to their own imaginations, and produce the three following letters for the entertainment of the day.

"SIR—I was last Thursday in an assembly of ladies, where there were thirteen different coloured hoods. Your *Spectator* of that day lying upon the table, they ordered me to read it to them, which I did with a very clear voice, till I came to the Greek verse at the end of it. I must confess I was a little startled at its popping upon me so unexpectedly. However, I covered my confusion as well as I could, and after having muttered two or three hard words to myself, laughed heartily and cried, 'A very good jest, faith!' The ladies desired me to explain it to them; but I begged their pardon for that, and told them, that if it had been proper for them to hear, they may be sure the author would not have wrapped it up in Greek. I then let drop several expressions, as if there was something in it that was not fit to be spoken before a company of ladies. Upon which the matron of the assembly, who was dressed in a cherry-coloured hood, commended the discretion of the writer for having thrown his filthy thoughts into Greek, which was likely to corrupt but few of his readers. At the same time she declared herself very well pleased, that he had not given a decisive opinion upon the new-fashioned hoods; 'For to tell you truly,' says she, 'I was afraid he would have made us ashamed to show our heads.' Now, sir, you must know, since this unlucky accident happened to me

in a company of ladies, among whom I passed for a most ingenious man, I have consulted one who is very well versed in the Greek language, and he assures me upon his word that your late quotation means no more, than that 'manners and not dress are the ornaments of a woman.' If this comes to the knowledge of my female admirers, I shall be very hard put to it to bring myself off handsomely. In the meanwhile I give you this account, that you may take care hereafter not to betray any of your well-wishers into the like inconveniences. It is in the number of these that I beg leave to subscribe myself, TOM TRIPPIT."

"MR. SPECTATOR—Your readers are so well pleased with your character of Sir Roger de Coverley, that there appeared a sensible joy in every coffee-house, upon hearing the old knight was come to town. I am now with a knot of his admirers, who make it their joint request to you, that you would give us public notice of the window or balcony where the knight intends to make his appearance. He has already given great satisfaction to several who have seen him at Squire's Coffee-house. If you think fit to place your short face at Sir Roger's left elbow, we shall take the hint, and gratefully acknowledge so great a favour.—I am, sir, your most devoted humble servant, C. D."

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The Spectator, No. 271. Thursday, January 10, 1712.

XCVI

The Dissection of a Beau's Head

—Tribus Anticyris caput insanabile—JUV.

I WAS yesterday engaged in an assembly of virtuosos, where one of them produced many curious observations which he had lately made in the anatomy of an human body. Another of the company communicated to us several wonderful discoveries, which he had also made on the same subject by the help of very fine glasses. This gave birth to a great variety of uncommon remarks, and furnished discourse for the remaining part of the day.

The different opinions which were started on this occasion, presented to my imagination so many new ideas, that by mixing with those which were already there, they employed my fancy all the last night, and composed a very wild extravagant dream.

I was invited, methought, to the dissection of a beau's head and of a coquette's heart, which were both of them laid on a table before us. An imaginary operator opened the first with a great deal of nicety, which, upon a cursory and superficial view, appeared like the head of another man; but upon applying our glasses to it, we made a very odd discovery, namely, that what we looked upon as brains, were not such in reality, but an heap of strange materials wound up in that shape and texture, and packed together with

wonderful art in the several cavities of the skull. For, as Homer tells us, that the blood of the gods is not real blood, but only something like it; so we found that the brain of a beau is not real brain, but only something like it.

The pineal gland, which many of our modern philosophers suppose to be the seat of the soul, smelt very strong of essence and orange-flower water, and was encompassed with a kind of horny substance cut into a thousand little faces or mirrors, which were imperceptible to the naked eye; insomuch that the soul, if there had been any here, must have been always taken up in contemplating her own beauties.

We observed a large *antrum* or cavity in the *sinciput*, that was filled with ribbons, lace, and embroidery, wrought together in a most curious piece of network, the parts of which were likewise imperceptible to the naked eye. Another of these *antrums* or cavities was stuffed with invisible billet-doux, love-letters, pricked dances, and other trumpery of the same nature. In another we found a kind of powder, which set the whole company a sneezing, and by the scent discovered itself to be right Spanish. The several other cells were stored with commodities of the same kind, of which it would be tedious to give the reader an exact inventory.

There was a large cavity on each side of the head, which I must not omit. That on the right side was filled with fictions, flatteries, and falsehoods, vows, promises, and protestations; that on the left with oaths and imprecations. There issued out a duct

from each of these cells, which ran into the root of the tongue, where both joined together and passed forward in one common duct to the tip of it. We discovered several little roads or canals running from the ear into the brain, and took particular care to trace them out through their several passages. One of them extended itself to a bundle of sonnets and little musical instruments. Others ended in several bladders, which were filled either with wind or froth. But the large canal entered into a great cavity of the skull, from whence there went another canal into the tongue. This great cavity was filled with a kind of spongy substance, which the French anatomists call *galimatias*, and the English, nonsense.

The skins of the forehead were extremely tough and thick, and, what very much surprised us, had not in them any single blood-vessel that we were able to discover, either with or without our glasses; from whence we concluded, that the party, when alive, must have been entirely deprived of the faculty of blushing.

The *os cribriforme* was exceedingly stuffed, and in some places damaged with snuff. We could not but take notice in particular of that small muscle, which is not often discovered in dissections, and draws the nose upwards, when it expresses the contempt which the owner of it has, upon seeing anything he does not like, or hearing anything he does not understand. I need not tell my learned reader, this is that muscle which performs the motion so often mentioned by the

Latin poets, when they talk of a man's cocking his nose, or playing the rhinoceros.

We did not find anything very remarkable in the eye, saving only that the *musculi amatorii*, or, as we may translate it into English, the ogling muscles, were very much worn and decayed with use; whereas, on the contrary, the *elevator*, or the muscle which turns the eye towards heaven, did not appear to have been used at all.

I have only mentioned in this dissection such new discoveries as we were able to make, and have not taken any notice of those parts which are to be met with in common heads. As for the skull, the face, and indeed the whole outward shape and figure of the head, we could not discover any difference from what we observe in the heads of other men. We were informed, that the person to whom this head belonged, had passed for a man above five-and-thirty years; during which time he eat and drank like other people, dressed well, talked loud, laughed frequently, and on particular occasions had acquitted himself tolerably at a ball or an assembly; to which one of the company added, that a certain knot of ladies took him for a wit. He was cut off in the flower of his age by the blow of a paring-shovel, having been surprised by an eminent citizen, as he was tendering some civilities to his wife.

When we had thoroughly examined this head with all its apartments and its several kinds of furniture, we put up the brain, such as it was, into its proper place, and laid it aside under a broad piece of scarlet

cloth, in order to be prepared and kept in a great repository of dissections, our operator telling us that the preparation would not be so difficult as that of another brain, for that he had observed several of the little pipes and tubes which ran through the brain were already filled with a kind of mercurial substance, which he looked upon to be true quicksilver.

He applied himself in the next place to the coquette's heart, which he likewise laid open with great dexterity. There occurred to us many particularities in this dissection; but being unwilling to burden my reader's memory too much, I shall reserve this subject for the speculation of another day.

The Spectator, No. 275. Tuesday, January 15, 1712.

XCVII

The Sorrows of Sir John Enville, Knt.

Malo Venusinam, quam te, Cornelia, mater
Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus affers
Grande supercilium, et numeras in dote triumphos.
Tolle tuum precor Annibalem victumque Syphacem
In castris, et cum tota Carthagine migra. JUV.

IT is observed, that a man improves more by reading the story of a person eminent for prudence and virtue, than by the finest rules and precepts of morality. In the same manner a representation of those calamities and misfortunes which a weak man suffers from wrong measures and ill-concerted schemes of life, is apt to make a deeper impression upon our minds, than the

wisest maxims and instructions that can be given us for avoiding the like follies and indiscretions in our own private conduct. It is for this reason that I lay before my reader the following letter, and leave it with him to make his own use of it, without adding any reflections of my own upon the subject matter.

"MR. SPECTATOR—Having carefully perused a letter sent you by Josiah Fribble, Esq., with your subsequent discourse upon pin-money, I do presume to trouble you with an account of my own case, which I look upon to be no less deplorable than that of Squire Fribble. I am a person of no extraction, having begun the world with a small parcel of rusty iron, and was for some years commonly known by the name of Jack Anvil. I have naturally a very happy genius for getting money, insomuch that by the age of five and twenty I had scraped together four thousand two hundred pounds, five shillings, and a few odd pence. I then launched out into considerable business, and became a bold trader both by sea and land, which in a few years raised me a very great fortune. For these my good services I was knighted in the thirty-fifth year of my age, and lived with great dignity among my city neighbours by the name of Sir John Anvil. Being in my temper very ambitious, I was now bent upon making a family, and accordingly resolved that my descendants should have a dash of good blood in their veins. In order to this I made love to the Lady Mary Oddly, an indigent young woman

of quality. To cut short the marriage treaty, I threw her a *charte blanche*, as our newspapers call it, desiring her to write upon it her own terms. She was very concise in her demands, insisting only that the disposal of my fortune, and the regulation of my family, should be entirely in her hands. Her father and brothers appeared exceedingly averse to this match, and would not see me for some time; but at present are so well reconciled, that they dine with me almost every day, and have borrowed considerable sums of me; which my Lady Mary very often twits me with, when she would show me how kind her relations are to me. She had no portion, as I told you before, but what she wanted in fortune, she makes up in spirit. She at first changed my name to Sir John Envil, and at present writes herself Mary Enville. I have had some children by her, whom she has christened with the surnames of her family, in order, as she tells me, to wear out the homeliness of their parentage by the father's side. Our eldest son is the Honourable Oddly Enville, Esq., and our eldest daughter Harriot Enville. Upon her first coming into my family, she turned off a parcel of very careful servants, who had been long with me, and introduced in their stead a couple of black-a-moors, and three or four very genteel fellows in laced liveries, besides her French woman, who is perpetually making a noise in the house in a language which nobody understands except my Lady Mary. She next set herself to reform every room of my house, having glazed all my chimney-pieces with looking-glass, and

planted every corner with such heaps of china, that I am obliged to move about my own house with the greatest caution and circumspection, for fear of hurting some of our brittle furniture. She makes an illumination once a week with wax-candles in one of the largest rooms, in order, as she phrases it, to see company. At which time she always desires me to be abroad, or to confine myself to the cock-loft, that I may not disgrace her among her visitants of quality. Her footmen, as I told you before, are such beaus that I do not much care for asking them questions; when I do, they answer me with a saucy frown, and say that everything which I find fault with was done by my Lady Mary's order. She tells me that she intends they shall wear swords with their next liveries, having lately observed the footmen of two or three persons of quality hanging behind the coach with swords by their sides. As soon as the first honeymoon was over, I represented to her the unreasonableness of those daily innovations which she made in my family; but she told me I was no longer to consider myself as Sir John Anvil, but as her husband; and added, with a frown, that I did not seem to know who she was. I was surprised to be treated thus, after such familiarities as had passed between us. But she has since given me to know, that whatever freedoms she may sometimes indulge me in, she expects in general to be treated with the respect that is due to her birth and quality. Our children have been trained up from their infancy with so many accounts of their mother's family, that they know the

stories of all the great men and women it has produced. Their mother tells them, that such an one commanded in such a sea engagement, that their great-grandfather had a horse shot under him at Edgehill, that their uncle was at the siege of Buda, and that her mother danced in a ball at court with the Duke of Monmouth; with abundance of fiddle-faddle of the same nature. I was the other day a little out of countenance at a question of my little daughter Harriot, who asked me with a great deal of innocence, why I never told them of the generals and admirals that had been in *my* family. As for my eldest son Oddly, he has been so spirited up by his mother, that if he does not mend his manners I shall go near to disinherit him. He drew his sword upon me before he was nine years old, and told me that he expected to be used like a gentleman; upon my offering to correct him for his insolence, my Lady Mary stept in between us, and told me that I ought to consider there was some difference between his mother and mine. She is perpetually finding out the features of her own relations in every one of my children, though by the way I have a little chub-faced boy as like me as he can stare, if I durst say so; but what most angers me, when she sees me playing with any of them upon my knee, she has begged me more than once to converse with the children as little as possible, that they may not learn any of my awkward tricks.

"You must further know, since I am opening my heart to you, that she thinks herself my superior in sense as much as she is in quality, and therefore treats

me like a plain well-meaning man, who does not know the world. She dictates to me in my own business, sets me right in point of trade, and if I disagree with her about any of my ships at sea, wonders that I will dispute with her, when I know very well that her great-grandfather was a flag-officer.

"To complete my sufferings, she has teased me for this quarter of a year last past, to remove into one of the squares at the other end of the town, promising for my encouragement, that I shall have as good a cock-loft as any gentleman in the square; to which the Honourable Oddly Enville, Esq., always adds, like a jackanapes as he is, that he hopes 'twill be as near the court as possible.

"In short, Mr. Spectator, I am so much out of my natural element, that to recover my old way of life I would be content to begin the world again, and be plain Jack Anvil; but alas! I am in for life, and am bound to subscribe myself, with great sorrow of heart, your humble servant, JOHN ENVILLE, KNT."

The Spectator, No. 299. Tuesday, February 12, 1712.

XCVIII

The Political Academy

Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis
Tempus eget— VIRG.

OUR late newspapers being full of the project now on foot in the court of France for establishing a political

academy, and I myself having received letters from several virtuosos among my foreign correspondents, which give some light into that affair, I intend to make it the subject of this day's speculation. A general account of this project may be met with in the *Daily Courant* of last Friday, in the following words translated from the *Gazette* of Amsterdam.

Paris, February 12.—"'Tis confirmed that the king has resolved to establish a new academy for politics, of which the Marquis de Torcy, minister and secretary of state, is to be protector. Six academicians are to be chosen, endowed with proper talents, for beginning to form this academy, into which no person is to be admitted under twenty-five years of age: they must likewise have each an estate of two thousand livres a year, either in possession or to come to them by inheritance. The king will allow to each a pension of a thousand livres. They are likewise to have able masters to teach them the necessary sciences, and to instruct them in all the treaties of peace, alliance, and others, which have been made in several ages past. These members are to meet twice a week at the Louvre. From this seminary are to be chosen secretaries to embassies, who by degrees may advance to higher employments."

Cardinal Richelieu's politics made France the terror of Europe. The statesmen who have appeared in that nation of late years, have on the contrary rendered it either the pity or contempt of its neighbours. The cardinal erected that famous Academy which has

carried all the parts of polite learning to the greatest height. His chief design in that institution was to divert the men of genius from meddling with politics, a province in which he did not care to have any one else to interfere with him. On the contrary, the Marquis de Torcy seems resolved to make several young men in France as wise as himself, and is therefore taken up at present in establishing a nursery of statesmen.

Some private letters add, that there will also be erected a seminary of petticoat politicians, who are to be brought up at the feet of Madame de Maintenon, and to be dispatched into foreign courts upon any emergencies of state; but as the news of this last project has not been yet confirmed, I shall take no further notice of it.

Several of my readers may doubtless remember that upon the conclusion of the last war, which had been carried on so successfully by the enemy, their generals were many of them transformed into ambassadors; but the conduct of those who have commanded in the present war, has, it seems, brought so little honour and advantage to their great monarch, that he is resolved to trust his affairs no longer in the hands of those military gentlemen.

The regulations of this new academy very much deserve our attention. The students are to have in possession or reversion an estate of two thousand French livres per annum, which, as the present exchange runs, will amount to at least one hundred and twenty-

six pounds English. This, with the royal allowance of a thousand livres, will enable them to find themselves in coffee and snuff; not to mention newspapers, pen and ink, wax and wafers, with the like necessaries for politicians.

A man must be at least five and twenty before he can be initiated into the mysteries of this academy, though there is no question but many grave persons of a much more advanced age, who have been constant readers of the Paris *Gazette*, will be glad to begin the world anew, and enter themselves upon this list of politicians.

The society of these hopeful young gentlemen is to be under the direction of six professors, who, it seems, are to be speculative statesmen, and drawn out of the body of the royal academy. These six wise masters, according to my private letters, are to have the following parts allotted them.

The first is to instruct the students in state legerdemain, as how to take off the impression of a seal, to split a wafer, to open a letter, to fold it up again, with other the like ingenious feats of dexterity and art. When the students have accomplished themselves in this part of their profession, they are to be delivered into the hands of their second instructor, who is a kind of posture-master.

This artist is to teach them how to nod judiciously, to shrug up their shoulders in a dubious case, to connive with either eye, and in a word, the whole practice of political grimace.

The third is a sort of language-master, who is to

instruct them in the style proper for a foreign minister in his ordinary discourse. And to the end that this college of statesmen may be thoroughly practised in the political style, they are to make use of it in their common conversations, before they are employed either in foreign or domestic affairs. If one of them asks another, what o'clock it is, the other is to answer him indirectly, and, if possible, to turn off the question. If he is desired to change a louis-d'or, he must beg time to consider of it. If it be inquired of him, whether the king is at Versailles or Marly, he must answer in a whisper. If he be asked the news of the late *Gazette*, or the subject of a proclamation, he is to reply that he has not yet read it; or if he does not care for explaining himself so far, he needs only draw his brow up in wrinkles, or elevate the left shoulder.

The fourth professor is to teach the whole art of political characters and hieroglyphics; and to the end that they may be perfect also in this practice, they are not to send a note to one another (though it be but to borrow a Tacitus or a Machiavel) which is not written in cipher.

Their fifth professor, it is thought, will be chosen out of the Society of Jesuits, and is to be well read in the controversies of probable doctrines, mental reservations, and the rights of princes. This learned man is to instruct them in the grammar, syntax, and construing part of treaty-latin; how to distinguish between the spirit and the letter, and likewise demonstrate how the same form of words may lay an

obligation upon any prince in Europe, different from that which it lays upon his Most Christian Majesty. He is likewise to teach them the art of finding flaws, loopholes, and evasions in the most solemn compacts, and particularly a great rabbinical secret, revived of late years by the fraternity of Jesuits, namely, that contradictory interpretations of the same article may both of them be true and valid.

When our statesmen are sufficiently improved by these several instructors, they are to receive their last polishing from one who is to act among them as master of the ceremonies. This gentleman is to give them lectures upon those important points of the elbow-chair and the stairhead, to instruct them in the different situations of the right-hand, and to furnish them with bows and inclinations of all sizes, measures, and proportions. In short, this professor is to give the society their stiffening, and infuse into their manners that beautiful political starch, which may qualify them for levees, conferences, visits, and make them shine in what vulgar minds are apt to look upon as trifles.

I have not yet heard any further particulars, which are to be observed in this society of unfledged statesmen; but I must confess, had I a son of five and twenty, that should take it into his head at that age to set up for a politician, I think I should go near to disinherit him for a blockhead. Besides, I should be apprehensive lest the same arts which are to enable him to negotiate between potentates, might a little infect his ordinary behaviour between man and man.

There is no question but these young Machiavels will, in a little time, turn their college upside down with plots and stratagems, and lay as many schemes to circumvent one another in a frog or a salad, as they may hereafter put in practice to overreach a neighbouring prince or state.

We are told that the Spartans, though they punished theft in their young men when it was discovered, looked upon it as honourable if it succeeded. Provided the conveyance was clean and unsuspected, a youth might afterwards boast of it. This, say the historians, was to keep them sharp, and to hinder them from being imposed upon, either in their public or private negotiations. Whether any such relaxations of morality, such little *jeux d'esprit*, ought not to be allowed in this intended seminary of politicians, I shall leave to the wisdom of their founder.

In the meantime we have fair warning given us by this doughty body of statesmen; and as Sylla saw many Mariuses in Caesar, so I think we may discover many Torcys in this college of academicians. Whatever we think of ourselves, I am afraid neither our Smyrna nor St. James's will be a match for it. Our coffee-houses are, indeed, very good institutions, but whether or no these our British schools of politics may furnish out as able envoys and secretaries as an academy that is set apart for that purpose, will deserve our serious consideration; especially if we remember that our country is more famous for producing men of integrity than statesmen; and

that, on the contrary, French truth and British policy makes a conspicuous figure *in nothing*, as the Earl of Rochester has very well observed in his admirable poem upon that barren subject.

The Spectator, No. 305. Tuesday, February 19, 1712.

XCIX

Fortune-Hunters

Nec Veneris pharetris macer est aut lampade fervet :
Inde faces ardent, veniunt a dote sagittae. JUV.

"MR. SPECTATOR—I am amazed that among all the variety of characters with which you have enriched your speculations, you have never given us a picture of those audacious young fellows among us, who commonly go by the name of fortune-stealers. You must know, sir, I am one who live in a continual apprehension of this sort of people, that lie in wait, day and night, for our children, and may be considered as a kind of kidnappers within the law. I am the father of a young heiress, whom I begin to look upon as marriageable, and who has looked upon herself as such for above these six years. She is now in the eighteenth year of her age. The fortune-hunters have already cast their eyes upon her, and take care to plant themselves in her view whenever she appears in any public assembly. I have myself caught a young jackanapes, with a pair of silver fringed gloves, in the very fact. You must know, sir, I have kept her as a prisoner of state ever

since she was in her teens. Her chamber windows are cross-barred, she is not permitted to go out of the house but with her keeper, who is a staid relation of my own; I have likewise forbid her the use of pen and ink for this twelve-month last past, and do not suffer a band-box to be carried into her room before it has been searched. Notwithstanding these precautions, I am at my wits' end for fear of any sudden surprise. There were, two or three nights ago, some fiddles heard in the street, which I am afraid portend me no good; not to mention a tall Irishman, that has been walking before my house more than once this winter. My kinswoman likewise informs me, that the girl has talked to her twice or thrice of a gentleman in a fair wig, and that she loves to go to church more than ever she did in her life. She gave me the slip about a week ago, upon which my whole house was in alarm. I immediately dispatched a hue and cry after her to the 'Change, to her mantua-maker, and to the young ladies that visit her; but after above an hour's search she returned of herself, having been taking a walk, as she told me, by Rosamond's pond. I have hereupon turned off her woman, doubled her guards, and given new instructions to my relation, who, to give her her due, keeps a watchful eye over all her motions. This, sir, keeps me in a perpetual anxiety, and makes me very often watch when my daughter sleeps, as I am afraid she is even with me in her turn. Now, sir, what I would desire of you is, to represent to this

fluttering tribe of young fellows, who are for making their fortunes by these indirect means, that stealing a man's daughter for the sake of her portion, is but a kind of tolerated robbery; and that they make but a poor amends to the father, whom they plunder after this manner, by going to bed with his child. Dear sir, be speedy in your thoughts on this subject, that, if possible, they may appear before the disbanding of the army.—I am, sir, your most humble servant,

TIM. WATCHWELL."

Themistocles, the great Athenian general, being asked whether he would choose to marry his daughter to an indigent man of merit, or to a worthless man of an estate, replied, that he should prefer a man without an estate, to an estate without a man. The worst of it is, our modern fortune-hunters are those who turn their heads that way, because they are good for nothing else. If a young fellow finds he can make nothing of Coke and Littleton, he provides himself with a ladder of ropes, and by that means very often enters upon the premises.

The same art of scaling has likewise been practised with good success by many military engineers. Stratagems of this nature make parts and industry superfluous, and cut short the way to riches.

Nor is vanity a less motive than idleness to this kind of mercenary pursuit. A fop who admires his person in a glass, soon enters into a resolution of making his fortune by it, not questioning but every

woman that falls in his way will do him as much justice as he does himself. When an heiress sees a man throwing particular graces into his ogle, or talking loud within her hearing, she ought to look to herself; but if withal she observes a pair of red heels, a patch, or any other particularity in his dress, she cannot take too much care of her person. These are baits not to be trifled with, charms that have done a world of execution, and made their way into hearts which have been thought impregnable. The force of a man with these qualifications is so well known, that I am credibly informed there are several female undertakers about the 'Change, who, upon the arrival of a likely man out of a neighbouring kingdom, will furnish him with proper dress from head to foot, to be paid for at a double price on the day of marriage.

We must, however, distinguish between fortune-hunters and fortune-stealers. The first are those assiduous gentlemen who employ their whole lives in the chase, without ever coming at the quarry. Suffenus has combed and powdered at the ladies for thirty years together, and taken his stand in a side box, till he is grown wrinkled under their eyes. He is now laying the same snares for the present generation of beauties, which he practised on their mothers. Cottilus, after having made his applications to more than you meet with in Mr. Cowley's ballad of mistresses, was at last smitten with a city lady of £20,000 sterling; but died of old age before he could

bring matters to bear. Nor must I here omit my worthy friend Mr. Honeycomb, who has often told us in the club, that for twenty years successively, upon the death of a childless rich man, he immediately drew on his boots, called for his horse, and made up to the widow. When he is rallied upon his ill success, Will with his usual gaiety tells us, that he always found her pre-engaged.

Widows are indeed the great game of your fortune-hunters. There is scarce a young fellow in the town of six foot high, that has not passed in review before one or other of these wealthy relicts. *Hudibras's* Cupid, who

> —took his stand
> Upon a widow's jointure land,

is daily employed in throwing darts, and kindling flames. But as for widows, they are such a subtle generation of people, that they may be left to their own conduct; or, if they make a false step in it, they are answerable for it to nobody but themselves. The young innocent creatures who have no knowledge and experience of the world, are those whose safety I would principally consult in this speculation. The stealing of such an one should, in my opinion, be as punishable as a rape. Where there is no judgment, there is no choice; and why the inveigling a woman before she is come to years of discretion, should not be as criminal as the seducing of her before she is ten years old, I am at a loss to comprehend.

The Spectator, No. 311. Tuesday, February 26, 1712.

C

The Citizen's Journal

—fruges consumere nati.—Hor.

Augustus, a few moments before his death, asked his friends who stood about him, if they thought he had acted his part well; and upon receiving such an answer as was due to his extraordinary merit, "Let me then," says he, "go off the stage with your applause"; using the expression with which the Roman actors made their exit at the conclusion of a dramatic piece. I could wish that men, while they are in health, would consider well the nature of the part they are engaged in, and what figure it will make in the minds of those they leave behind them: whether it was worth coming into the world for, whether it be suitable to a reasonable being; in short, whether it appears graceful in this life, or will turn to an advantage in the next. Let the sycophant or buffoon, the satirist or the good companion, consider with himself, when his body shall be laid in the grave and his soul pass into another state of existence, how much it will redound to his praise to have it said of him, that no man in England eat better, that he had an admirable talent at turning his friends into ridicule, that nobody outdid him at an ill-natured jest, or that he never went to bed before he had dispatched his third bottle. These are, however, very common

funeral orations and elogiums on deceased persons who have acted among mankind with some figure and reputation.

But if we look into the bulk of our species, they are such as are not likely to be remembered a moment after their disappearance. They leave behind them no traces of their existence, but are forgotten as though they had never been. They are neither wanted by the poor, regretted by the rich, nor celebrated by the learned. They are neither missed in the commonwealth, nor lamented by private persons. Their actions are of no significancy to mankind, and might have been performed by creatures of much less dignity than those who are distinguished by the faculty of reason. An eminent French author speaks somewhere to the following purpose: I have often seen from my chamber-window two noble creatures, both of them of an erect countenance and endowed with reason. These two intellectual beings are employed from morning to night in rubbing two smooth stones one upon another; that is, as the vulgar phrase it, in polishing marble.

My friend, Sir Andrew Freeport, as we were sitting in the club last night, gave us an account of a sober citizen, who died a few days since. This honest man, being of greater consequence in his own thoughts than in the eye of the world, had for some years past kept a journal of his life. Sir Andrew showed us one week of it. Since the occurrences set down in it mark out such a road of action as that I have been speaking of,

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OAKLAND

I shall present my reader with a faithful copy of it, after having first informed him, that the deceased person had in his youth been bred to trade, but finding himself not so well turned for business, he had for several years last past lived altogether upon a moderate annuity.

"MONDAY, *eight o'clock.* I put on my clothes and walked into the parlour.

Nine o'clock ditto. Tied my knee-strings, and washed my hands.

Hours, ten, eleven, and twelve. Smoked three pipes of Virginia. Read the *Supplement* and *Daily Courant.* Things go ill in the North. Mr. Nisby's opinion thereupon.

One o'clock in the afternoon. Chid Ralph for mislaying my tobacco-box.

Two o'clock. Sat down to dinner. *Mem.* Too many plums, and no suet.

From three to four. Took my afternoon's nap.

From four to six. Walked into the fields. Wind, S.S.E.

From six to ten. At the club. Mr. Nisby's opinion about the peace.

Ten o'clock. Went to bed, slept sound.

TUESDAY, BEING HOLIDAY, *eight o'clock.* Rose as usual.

Nine o'clock. Washed hands and face, shaved, put on my double-soled shoes.

Ten, eleven, twelve. Took a walk to Islington.

One. Took a pot of Mother Cob's mild.

Between two and three. Returned, dined on a knuckle of veal and bacon. *Mem.* Sprouts wanting.

Three. Nap as usual.

From four to six. Coffee-house. Read the news. A dish of twist. Grand Vizier strangled.

From six to ten. At the club. Mr. Nisby's account of the Great Turk.

Ten. Dream of the Grand Vizier. Broken sleep.

WEDNESDAY, *eight o'clock.* Tongue of my shoe-buckle broke. Hands, but not face.

Nine. Paid off the butcher's bill. *Mem.* To be allowed for the last leg of mutton.

Ten, eleven. At the coffee-house. More work in the North. Stranger in a black wig asked me how stocks went.

From twelve to one. Walked in the fields. Wind to the south.

From one to two. Smoked a pipe and an half.

Two. Dined as usual. Stomach good.

Three. Nap broke by the falling of a pewter dish. *Mem.* Cook-maid in love, and grown careless.

From four to six. At the coffee-house. Advice from Smyrna, that the Grand Vizier was first of all strangled, and afterwards beheaded.

Six o'clock in the evening. Was half an hour in the club before anybody else came. Mr. Nisby of opinion that the Grand Vizier was not strangled the sixth instant.

Ten at night. Went to bed. Slept without waking till nine next morning.

THURSDAY, *nine o'clock.* Staid within till two o'clock for Sir Timothy; who did not bring me my annuity according to his promise.

Two in the afternoon. Sat down to dinner. Loss of appetite. Small beer sour. Beef overcorned.

Three. Could not take my nap.

Four and five. Gave Ralph a box on the ear. Turned off my cook-maid. Sent a message to Sir Timothy. *Mem.* I did not go to the club to-night. Went to bed at nine o'clock.

FRIDAY. Passed the morning in meditation upon Sir Timothy, who was with me a quarter before twelve.

Twelve o'clock. Bought a new head to my cane, and a tongue to my buckle. Drank a glass of purl to recover appetite.

Two and three. Dined, and slept well.

From four to six. Went to the coffee-house. Met Mr. Nisby there. Smoked several pipes. Mr. Nisby of opinion that laced coffee is bad for the head.

Six o'clock. At the club as steward. Sat late.

Twelve o'clock. Went to bed, dreamt that I drank small beer with the Grand Vizier.

SATURDAY. Waked at eleven, walked in the fields. Wind, N.E.

Twelve. Caught in a shower.

One in the afternoon. Returned home, and dried myself.

Two. Mr. Nisby dined with me. First course, marrow-bones; second, ox-cheek, with a bottle of Brooks and Hellier.

Three o'clock. Overslept myself.

Six. Went to the club. Like to have fallen into a gutter. Grand Vizier certainly dead," etc.

I question not but the reader will be surprised to find the above-mentioned journalist taking so much care of a life that was filled with such inconsiderable actions and received so very small improvements; and yet, if we look into the behaviour of many whom we daily converse with, we shall find that most of their hours are taken up in those three important articles of eating, drinking, and sleeping. I do not suppose that a man loses his time, who is not engaged in public affairs or in an illustrious course of action. On the contrary, I believe our hours may very often be more profitably laid out in such transactions as make no figure in the world, than in such as are apt to draw upon them the attention of mankind. One may become wiser and better by several methods of employing oneself in secrecy and silence, and do what is laudable without noise or ostentation. I would, however, recommend to every one of my readers the keeping a journal of their lives for one week, and setting down punctually their whole series of employments during that space of time. This kind of self-

examination would give them a true state of themselves, and incline them to consider seriously what they are about. One day would rectify the omissions of another, and make a man weigh all those indifferent actions, which, though they are easily forgotten, must certainly be accounted for.

The Spectator, No. 317. Tuesday, March 4, 1712.

CI

The Lady's Journal

—Modo vir, modo foemina—VIRG.

THE journal with which I presented my reader on Tuesday last, has brought me in several letters, with accounts of many private lives cast into that form. I have the *Rake's Journal*, the *Sot's Journal*, the *Whoremaster's Journal*, and among several others a very curious piece entitled, *The Journal of a Mohock*. By these instances I find that the intention of my last Tuesday's paper has been mistaken by many of my readers. I did not design so much to expose vice as idleness, and aimed at those persons who pass away their time rather in trifles and impertinence, than in crimes and immoralities. Offences of this latter kind are not to be dallied with, or treated in so ludicrous a manner. In short, my journal only holds up folly to the light, and shows the disagreeableness of such actions as are indifferent in themselves, and blame-

able only as they proceed from creatures endowed with reason.

My following correspondent, who calls herself Clarinda, is such a journalist as I require: she seems by her letter to be placed in a modish state of indifference between vice and virtue, and to be susceptible of either, were there proper pains taken with her. Had her journal been filled with gallantries, or such occurrences as had shown her wholly divested of her natural innocence, notwithstanding it might have been more pleasing to the generality of readers, I should not have published it; but as it is only the picture of a life filled with a fashionable kind of gaiety and laziness, I shall set down five days of it, as I have received it from the hand of my correspondent.

"DEAR MR. SPECTATOR—You having set your readers an exercise in one of your last week's papers, I have performed mine according to your orders, and herewith send it you enclosed. You must know, Mr. Spectator, that I am a maiden lady of a good fortune, who have had several matches offered me for these ten years last past, and have at present warm applications made to me by a very pretty fellow. As I am at my own disposal, I come up to town every winter, and pass my time in it after the manner you will find in the following journal, which I began to write upon the very day after your *Spectator* upon that subject.

TUESDAY *night*. Could not go to sleep till one in the morning for thinking of my journal.

WEDNESDAY. *From eight till ten.* Drank two dishes of chocolate in bed, and fell asleep after them.

From ten to eleven. Eat a slice of bread and butter, drank a dish of bohea, read the *Spectator*.

From eleven to one. At my toilette, tried a new head. Gave orders for Veny to be combed and washed, *Mem.* I look best in blue.

From one till half an hour after two. Drove to the 'Change. Cheapened a couple of fans.

Till four. At dinner. *Mem.* Mr. Froth passed by in his new liveries.

From four to six. Dressed, paid a visit to old Lady Blithe and her sister, having before heard they were gone out of town that day.

From six to eleven. At basset. *Mem.* Never set again upon the ace of diamonds.

THURSDAY. *From eleven at night to eight in the morning.* Dreamed that I punted to Mr. Froth.

From eight to ten. Chocolate. Read two acts in *Aurenzebe* a-bed.

From ten to eleven. Tea-table. Sent to borrow Lady Faddle's Cupid for Veny. Read the play-bills. Received a letter from Mr. Froth. *Mem.* Locked it up in my strong box.

Rest of the morning. Fontange, the tire-woman, her account of my Lady Blithe's wash. Broke a tooth in my little tortoise-shell comb. Sent Frank to know how my Lady Hectick rested after her monkey's leaping out at window. Looked pale. Fontange tells me my glass is not true. Dressed by three.

From three to four. Dinner cold before I sat down.

From four to eleven. Saw company. Mr. Froth's opinion of Milton. His account of the Mohocks. His fancy for a pincushion. Picture in the lid of his snuff-box. Old Lady Faddle promises me her woman to cut my hair. Lost five guineas at crimp.

Twelve o'clock at night. Went to bed.

FRIDAY. *Eight in the morning.* A-bed. Read over all Mr. Froth's letters. Cupid and Veny.

Ten o'clock. Stayed within all day, not at home.

From ten to twelve. In conference with my mantua-maker. Sorted a suit of ribands. Broke my blue china cup.

From twelve to one. Shut myself up in my chamber, practised Lady Betty Modely's scuttle.

One in the afternoon. Called for my flowered handkerchief. Worked half a violet leaf in it. Eyes ached, and head out of order. Threw by my work, and read over the remaining part of *Aurenzebe.*

From three to four. Dined.

From four to twelve. Changed my mind, dressed, went abroad, and played at crimp till midnight. Found Mrs. Spitely at home. Conversation: Mrs. Brillant's necklace false stones. Old Lady Loveday going to be married to a young fellow that is not worth a groat. Miss Prue gone into the country. Tom Townley has red hair. *Mem.* Mrs. Spitely whispered in my ear that she had something to tell me about Mr. Froth. I am sure it is not true.

Between twelve and one. Dreamed that Mr. Froth lay at my feet, and called me Indamora.

SATURDAY. Rose at eight o'clock in the morning. Sat down to my toilette.

From eight to nine. Shifted a patch for half an hour before I could determine it. Fixed it above my left eyebrow.

From nine to twelve. Drank my tea, and dressed.

From twelve to two. At chapel. A great deal of good company. *Mem.* The third air in the new opera. Lady Blithe dressed frightfully.

From three to four. Dined. Mrs. Kitty called upon me to go to the opera before I was risen from table.

From dinner to six. Drank tea. Turned off a footman for being rude to Veny.

Six o'clock. Went to the opera. I did not see Mr. Froth till the beginning of the second act. Mr. Froth talked to a gentleman in a black wig. Bowed to a lady in the front box. Mr. Froth and his friend clapped Nicolini in the third act. Mr. Froth cried out "Ancora." Mr. Froth led me to my chair. I think he squeezed my hand.

Eleven at night. Went to bed. Melancholy dreams. Methought Nicolini said he was Mr. Froth.

SUNDAY. Indisposed.

MONDAY. *Eight o'clock.* Waked by Miss Kitty. *Aurenzebe* lay upon the chair by me. Kitty repeated without book the eight best lines in the play. Went in

our mobs to the dumb man, according to appointment. Told me that my lover's name began with a G. *Mem.* The conjurer was within a letter of Mr. Froth's name, etc.

"Upon looking back into this my journal, I find that I am at a loss to know whether I pass my time well or ill; and indeed never thought of considering how I did it, before I perused your speculation upon that subject. I scarce find a single action in these five days that I can thoroughly approve of, except the working upon the violet leaf, which I am resolved to finish the first day I am at leisure. As for Mr. Froth and Veny, I did not think they took up so much of my time and thoughts, as I find they do upon my journal. The latter of them I will turn off, if you insist upon it; and if Mr. Froth does not bring matters to a conclusion very suddenly, I will not let my life run away in a dream.—

Your humble servant, CLARINDA."

To resume one of the morals of my first paper, and to confirm Clarinda in her good inclinations, I would have her consider what a pretty figure she would make among posterity, were the history of her whole life published like these five days of it. I shall conclude my paper with an epitaph written by an uncertain author on Sir Philip Sidney's sister, a lady who seems to have been of a temper very much different from that of Clarinda. The last thought of it is so very

noble, that I dare say my reader will pardon the quotation.

On the Countess Dowager of Pembroke.

Underneath this marble hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;
Death, ere thou hast killed another,
Fair, and learned, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

The Spectator, No. 323. Tuesday, March, 11, 1712.

CII

Sir Roger de Coverley in Westminster Abbey

Ire tamen restat, Numa qua devenit, et Ancus.—Hor.

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me t'other night, that he had been reading my paper upon Westminster Abbey, in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies. He told me at the same time, that he observed I had promised another paper upon the tombs, and that he should be glad to go and see them with me, not having visited them since he had read history. I could not at first imagine how this came into the knight's head, till I recollected that he had been very busy all last summer upon Baker's *Chronicle*, which he has quoted several times in his disputes with Sir Andrew Freeport since his last coming to town. Accordingly I promised to call upon him the next morning, that we might go together to the Abbey.

I found the knight under his butler's hands, who always shaves him. He was no sooner dressed than he called for a glass of the widow Trueby's water, which he told me he always drank before he went abroad. He recommended to me a dram of it at the same time, with so much heartiness, that I could not forbear drinking it. As soon as I had got it down, I found it very unpalatable; upon which the knight, observing that I had made several wry faces, told me that he knew I should not like it at first, but that it was the best thing in the world against the stone or gravel.

I could have wished indeed that he had acquainted me with the virtues of it sooner; but it was too late to complain, and I knew what he had done was out of goodwill. Sir Roger told me further, that he looked upon it to be very good for a man whilst he staid in town, to keep off infection, and that he got together a quantity of it upon the first news of the sickness being at Dantzick: when of a sudden turning short to one of his servants, who stood behind him, he bid him call a hackney-coach, and take care it was an elderly man that drove it.

He then resumed his discourse upon Mrs. Trueby's water, telling me that the widow Trueby was one who did more good than all the doctors and apothecaries in the county; that she distilled every poppy that grew within five miles of her; that she distributed her water gratis among all sorts of people: to which the knight added, that she had a very great jointure, and that the whole country would fain have it a match

between him and her; "And truly," says Sir Roger, "if I had not been engaged, perhaps I could not have done better."

His discourse was broken off by his man's telling him he had called a coach. Upon our going to it, after having cast his eye upon the wheels, he asked the coachman if his axle-tree was good; upon the fellow's telling him he would warrant it, the knight turned to me, told me he looked like an honest man, and went in without further ceremony.

We had not gone far, when Sir Roger, popping out his head, called the coachman down from his box, and upon his presenting himself at the window, asked him if he smoked; as I was considering what this would end in, he bid him stop by the way at any good tobacconist's, and take in a roll of their best Virginia. Nothing material happened in the remaining part of our journey, till we were set down at the west end of the Abbey.

As we went up the body of the church, the knight pointed at the trophies upon one of the new monuments, and cried out, "A brave man, I warrant him!" Passing afterwards by Sir Cloudsly Shovel, he flung his hand that way, and cried, "Sir Cloudsly Shovel! a very gallant man!" As we stood before Busby's tomb, the knight uttered himself again after the same manner, "Dr. Busby, a great man! he whipped my grandfather; a very great man! I should have gone to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead; a very great man!"

We were immediately conducted into the little

chapel on the right hand. Sir Roger planting himself at our historian's elbow, was very attentive to everything he said, particularly to the account he gave us of the lord who had cut off the king of Morocco's head. Among several other figures, he was very well pleased to see the statesman Cecil upon his knees; and, concluding them all to be great men, was conducted to the figure which represents that martyr to good housewifery, who died by the prick of a needle. Upon our interpreter's telling us that she was a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, the knight was very inquisitive into her name and family; and after having regarded her finger for some time, "I wonder," says he, "that Sir Richard Baker has said nothing of her in his *Chronicle*."

We were then conveyed to the two coronation-chairs, where my old friend, after having heard that the stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from Scotland, was called Jacob's Pillar, sat himself down in the chair; and looking like the figure of an old Gothic king, asked our interpreter, what authority they had to say, that Jacob had ever been in Scotland? The fellow, instead of returning him an answer, told him, that he hoped his Honour would pay his forfeit. I could observe Sir Roger a little ruffled upon being thus trepanned; but our guide not insisting upon his demand, the knight soon recovered his good humour, and whispered in my ear, that if Will Wimble were with us, and saw those two chairs, it would go hard but he would

get a tobacco-stopper out of one or t'other of them.

Sir Roger, in the next place, laid his hand upon Edward the Third's sword, and leaning upon the pummel of it, gave us the whole history of the Black Prince; concluding, that in Sir Richard Baker's opinion, Edward the Third was one of the greatest princes that ever sat upon the English throne.

We were then shown Edward the Confessor's tomb; upon which Sir Roger acquainted us, that he was the first who touched for the Evil; and afterwards Henry the Fourth's, upon which he shook his head, and told us there was fine reading in the casualties of that reign.

Our conductor then pointed to that monument where there is the figure of one of our English kings without an head; and upon giving us to know, that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since: "Some Whig, I'll warrant you," says Sir Roger; "you ought to lock up your kings better; they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care."

The glorious names of Henry the Fifth and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining, and of doing justice to Sir Richard Baker, who, as our knight observed with some surprise, had a great many kings in him, whose monuments he had not seen in the Abbey.

For my own part, I could not but be pleased to see the knight show such an honest passion for the glory

of his country, and such a respectful gratitude to the memory of its princes.

I must not omit, that the benevolence of my good old friend, which flows out towards every one he converses with, made him very kind to our interpreter, whom he looked upon as an extraordinary man; for which reason he shook him by the hand at parting, telling him, that he should be very glad to see him at his lodgings in Norfolk Buildings, and talk over these matters with him more at leisure.

The Spectator, No. 329. Tuesday, March 18, 1712.

CIII

Sir Roger de Coverley at the Play

Respicere exemplar vitae morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.—HOR.

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy with me, assuring me at the same time, that he had not been at a play these twenty years. "The last I saw," said Sir Roger, "was *The Committee*, which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church of England comedy." He then proceeded to inquire of me who this *Distressed Mother*[1] was; and

[1] *The Distressed Mother*, a translation or adaptation, by Ambrose Philips, of Racine's tragedy *Andromaque*, was first acted on March 17, 1712.

PRESENTED TO ST. [illegible]
BY REV. T. CALLAGHAN

upon hearing that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a schoolboy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks[1] should be abroad. "I assure you," says he, "I thought I had fallen into their hands last night; for I observed two or three lusty black men that followed me half way up Fleet Street, and mended their pace behind me, in proportion as I put on to get away from them. You must know," continued the knight with a smile, "I fancied they had a mind to *hunt* me; for I remember an honest gentleman in my neighbourhood, who was served such a trick in King Charles the Second's time; for which reason he has not ventured himself in town ever since. I might have shown them very good sport, had this been their design; for as I am an old fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodged, and have played them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their lives before." Sir Roger added, that if these gentlemen had any such intention, they did not succeed very well in it; "for I threw them out," says he, "at the end of Norfolk Street, where I doubled the corner, and got shelter in my lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me.

[1] A set of ruffianly young men, who made it their business to molest and ill-treat peaceful passengers of both sexes in the streets by night. Their outrageous pranks are described by Steele in No. 324 of *The Spectator*. They took their name from the Mohocks or Mohawks, a tribe of North American Indians.

However," says the knight, "if Captain Sentry will make one with us to-morrow night, and if you will both of you call upon me about four o'clock, that we may be at the house before it is full, I will have my own coach in readiness to attend you, for John tells me he has got the fore-wheels mended."

The captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed hour, bid Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same sword which he made use of at the battle of Steenkirk.[1] Sir Roger's servants, and among the rest my old friend the butler, had, I found, provided themselves with good oaken plants, to attend their master upon this occasion. When we had placed him in his coach, with myself at his left hand, the captain before him, and his butler at the head of his footmen in the rear, we convoyed him in safety to the play-house; where, after having marched up the entry in good order, the captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit. As soon as the house was full, and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up and looked about him with that pleasure, which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself at the sight of a multitude of people, who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy to myself, as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit, that he made a very proper centre to a

[1] The battle in which the English under William III. were defeated by the French under Marshall Luxemburg. It was fought in 1692. A graphic description of the battle is given by Macaulay.

tragic audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me, that he did not believe the King of France himself had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism, and was well pleased to hear him at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for Andromache, and a little while after as much for Hermione; and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus.

When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary vehemence, "You can't imagine, sir, what 'tis to have to do with a widow." Upon Pyrrhus his threatening afterwards to leave her, the knight shook his head, and muttered to himself, "Ay, do if you can." This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination, that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered in my ear, "These widows, sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray," says he, "you that are a critic, is this play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of."

The fourth act very luckily begun before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer: "Well," says

the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, "I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost." He then renewed his attention, and from time to time fell a-praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom, at his first entering, he took for Astyanax; but he quickly set himself right in that particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, "who," says he, "must needs be a very fine child by the account that is given of him." Upon Hermione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audience gave a loud clap; to which Sir Roger added, "On my word, a notable young baggage!"

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of these intervals between the acts, to express their opinion of the players and of their respective parts. Sir Roger hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man; as they were afterwards applauding Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in a second time, "And let me tell you," says he, "though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them." Captain Sentry, seeing two or three wags who sat near us, lean with an attentive ear towards Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should smoke the knight, plucked him by the elbow, and whispered something in his ear, that lasted till the opening of the fifth act. The knight was wonderfully attentive to

the account which Orestes gives of Pyrrhus his death, and at the conclusion of it told me, it was such a bloody piece of work, that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing afterwards Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinary serious, and took occasion to moralize (in his way) upon an evil conscience, adding that "Orestes, in his madness, looked as if he saw something."

As we were the first that came into the house, so we were the last that went out of it; being resolved to have a clear passage for our old friend, whom we did not care to venture among the jostling of the crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his entertainment, and we guarded him to his lodgings in the same manner that we brought him to the play-house; being highly pleased, for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the good old man.

The Spectator, No. 335. Tuesday, March 25, 1712.

CIV

The Transmigrations of a Monkey

—Errat et illinc
Huc venit, hinc illuc, et quoslibet occupat artus
Spiritus: eque feris humana in corpora transit.
Inque feras noster— PYTHAG. *ap.* OV.

WILL HONEYCOMB, who loves to show upon occasion all the little learning he has picked up, told us yester-

day at the club, that he thought there might be a great deal said for the transmigration of souls, and that the eastern parts of the world believed in that doctrine to this day. "Sir Paul Rycaut," says he, "gives us an account of several well-disposed Mahometans that purchase the freedom of any little bird they see confined to a cage, and think they merit as much by it, as we should do here by ransoming any of our countrymen from their captivity at Algiers. You must know," says Will, "the reason is, because they consider every animal as a brother or a sister in disguise, and therefore think themselves obliged to extend their charity to them, though under such mean circumstances. They'll tell you," says Will, "that the soul of a man, when he dies, immediately passes into the body of another man, or of some brute, which he resembled in his humour or his fortune, when he was one of us."

As I was wondering what this profusion of learning would end in, Will told us that Jack Freelove, who was a fellow of whim, made love to one of those ladies who throw away all their fondness on parrots, monkeys, and lap-dogs. Upon going to pay her a visit one morning, he writ a very pretty epistle upon this hint. "Jack," says he, "was conducted into the parlour, where he diverted himself for some time with her favourite monkey, which was chained in one of the windows; till at length observing a pen and ink lie by him, he writ the following letter to his mistress, in the person of the monkey; and upon her not coming down so soon as

he expected, he left it in the window, and went about his business.

"The lady soon after coming into the parlour, and seeing her monkey look upon a paper with great earnestness, took it up, and to this day is in some doubt, says Will, whether it was written by Jack or the monkey.

"MADAM—Not having the gift of speech, I have a long time waited in vain for an opportunity of making myself known to you; and having at present the conveniences of pen, ink, and paper by me, I gladly take the occasion of giving you my history in writing, which I could not do by word of mouth. You must know, madam, that about a thousand years ago I was an Indian Brachman, and versed in all those mysterious secrets which your European philosopher, called Pythagoras, is said to have learned from our fraternity. I had so ingratiated myself by my great skill in the occult sciences with a demon whom I used to converse with, that he promised to grant me whatever I should ask of him. I desired that my soul might never pass into the body of a brute creature; but this he told me was not in his power to grant me. I then begged that into whatever creature I should chance to transmigrate, I might still retain my memory, and be conscious that I was the same person who lived in different animals. This he told me was within his power, and accordingly promised on the word of a demon that he would grant me what I desired. From that time forth I lived so

very unblameably that I was made president of a college of Brachmans, an office which I discharged with great integrity till the day of my death.

"I was then shuffled into another human body, and acted my part so very well in it, that I became first minister to a prince who reigned upon the banks of the Ganges. I here lived in great honour for several years, but by degrees lost all the innocence of the Brachman, being obliged to rifle and oppress the people to enrich my sovereign; till at length I became so odious, that my master, to recover his credit with his subjects, shot me through the heart with an arrow, as I was one day addressing myself to him at the head of his army.

"Upon my next remove I found myself in the woods under the shape of a jackal, and soon listed myself in the service of a lion. I used to yelp near his den about midnight, which was his time of rousing and seeking after his prey. He always followed me in the rear, and when I had run down a fat buck, a wild goat, or an hare, after he had feasted very plentifully upon it himself, would now and then throw me a bone that was but half picked for my encouragement; but upon my being unsuccessful in two or three chases, he gave me such a confounded gripe in his anger, that I died of it.

"In my next transmigration I was again set upon two legs, and became an Indian tax-gatherer; but having been guilty of great extravagances, and being married to an expensive jade of a wife, I ran so cursedly in debt, that I durst not show my head. I could no

sooner step out of my house, but I was arrested by somebody or other that lay in wait for me. As I ventured abroad one night in the dusk of the evening, I was taken up and hurried into a dungeon, where I died a few months after.

"My soul then entered into a flying-fish, and in that state led a most melancholy life for the space of six years. Several fishes of prey pursued me when I was in the water, and if I betook myself to my wings, it was ten to one but I had a flock of birds aiming at me. As I was one day flying amidst a fleet of English ships, I observed a huge sea-gull whetting his bill and hovering just over my head: upon my dipping into the water to avoid him, I fell into the mouth of a monstrous shark that swallowed me down in an instant.

"I was some years afterwards, to my great surprise, an eminent banker in Lombard Street; and remembering how I had formerly suffered for want of money, became so very sordid and avaricious, that the whole town cried shame of me. I was a miserable little old fellow to look upon, for I had in a manner starved myself, and was nothing but skin and bone when I died.

"I was afterwards very much troubled and amazed to find myself dwindled into an emmet. I was heartily concerned to make so insignificant a figure, and did not know but some time or other I might be reduced to a mite if I did not mend my manners. I therefore applied myself with great diligence to the offices that were allotted me, and was generally looked upon as

the notablest ant in the whole molehill. I was at last picked up, as I was groaning under a burden, by an unlucky cock-sparrow that lived in the neighbourhood, and had before made great depredations upon our commonwealth.

"I then bettered my condition a little, and lived a whole summer in the shape of a bee; but being tired with the painful and penurious life I had undergone in my two last transmigrations, I fell into the other extreme, and turned drone. As I one day headed a party to plunder an hive, we were received so warmly by the swarm which defended it, that we were most of us left dead upon the spot.

"I might tell you of many other transmigrations which I went through: how I was a town-rake, and afterwards did penance in a bay-gelding for ten years; as also how I was a tailor, a shrimp, and a tom-tit. In the last of these my shapes I was shot in the Christmas holidays by a young jackanapes, who would needs try his new gun upon me.

"But I shall pass over these and several other stages of life, to remind you of the young beau who made love to you about six years since. You may remember, madam, how he masked, and danced, and sung, and played a thousand tricks to gain you; and how he was at last carried off by a cold that he got under your window one night in a serenade. I was that unfortunate young fellow, whom you were then so cruel to. Not long after my shifting that unlucky body, I found myself upon a hill in Ethiopia, where I

lived in my present grotesque shape, till I was caught by a servant of the English factory, and sent over into Great Britain: I need not inform you how I came into your hands. You see, madam, this is not the first time that you have had me in a chain; I am, however, very happy in this my captivity, as you often bestow on me those kisses and caresses which I would have given the world for, when I was a man. I hope this discovery of my person will not tend to my disadvantage, but that you will still continue your accustomed favours to

Your most devoted humble servant, PUG."

"*P.S.*—I would advise your little shock-dog to keep out of my way; for as I look upon him to be the most formidable of my rivals, I may chance one time or other to give him such a snap as he won't like."

The Spectator, No. 343. Thursday, April 3, 1712.

CV

Magnanimous Silence

Non ego mordaci distrinxi carmine quenquam.—OVID.

I HAVE been very often tempted to write invectives upon those who have detracted from my works, or spoken in derogation of my person; but I look upon it as a particular happiness, that I have always hindered my resentments from proceeding to this extremity. I once had gone through half a satire, but found so many motions of humanity rising in me towards the

persons whom I had severely treated, that I threw it into the fire without finishing it. I have been angry enough to make several little epigrams and lampoons; and after having admired them a day or two, have likewise committed them to the flames. These I look upon as so many sacrifices to humanity, and have received much greater satisfaction from the suppressing such performances, than I could have done from any reputation they might have procured me, or from any mortification they might have given my enemies, in case I had made them public. If a man has any talent in writing, it shows a good mind to forbear answering calumnies and reproaches in the same spirit of bitterness with which they are offered; but when a man has been at some pains in making suitable returns to an enemy, and has the instruments of revenge in his hands, to let drop his wrath, and stifle his resentments, seems to have something in it great and heroical. There is a particular merit in such a way of forgiving an enemy; and the more violent and unprovoked the offence has been, the greater still is the merit of him who thus forgives it.

I never met with a consideration that is more finely spun, and what has better pleased me, than one in Epictetus, which places an enemy in a new light, and gives us a view of him altogether different from that in which we are used to regard him. The sense of it is as follows: "Does a man reproach thee for being proud or ill-natured, envious or conceited, ignorant or detracting? Consider with thyself whether his

reproaches are true ; if they are not, consider that thou art not the person whom he reproaches, but that he reviles an imaginary being, and perhaps loves what thou really art, though he hates what thou appearest to be. If his reproaches are true, if thou art the envious ill-natured man he takes thee for, give thyself another turn, become mild, affable, and obliging, and his reproaches of thee naturally cease : his reproaches may indeed continue, but thou art no longer the person whom he reproaches."

I often apply this rule to myself ; and when I hear of a satirical speech or writing that is aimed at me, I examine my own heart, whether I deserve it or not. If I bring in a verdict against myself, I endeavour to rectify my conduct for the future in those particulars which have drawn the censure upon me ; but if the whole invective be grounded upon a falsehood, I trouble myself no further about it, and look upon my name at the head of it to signify no more than one of those fictitious names made use of by an author to introduce an imaginary character. Why should a man be sensible of the sting of a reproach, who is a stranger to the guilt that is implied in it ? or subject himself to the penalty, when he knows he has never committed the crime ? This is a piece of fortitude which every one owes to his own innocence, and without which it is impossible for a man of any merit or figure to live at peace with himself in a country that abounds with wit and liberty.

The famous Monsieur Balzac, in a letter to the

chancellor of France, who had prevented the publication of a book against him, has the following words, which are a lively picture of the greatness of mind so visible in the works of that author. "If it was a new thing, it may be I should not be displeased with the suppression of the first libel that should abuse me; but since there are enough of them to make a small library, I am secretly pleased to see the number increased, and take delight in raising a heap of stones that envy has cast at me without doing me any harm."

The author here alludes to those monuments of the Eastern nations, which were mountains of stones raised upon the dead body by travellers, that used to cast every one his stone upon it as they passed by. It is certain that no monument is so glorious as one which is thus raised by the hands of envy. For my part, I admire an author for such a temper of mind as enables him to bear an undeserved reproach without resentment, more than for all the wit of any the finest satirical reply.

Thus far I thought necessary to explain myself in relation to those who have animadverted on this paper, and to show the reasons why I have not thought fit to return them any formal answer. I must further add, that the work would have been of very little use to the public, had it been filled with personal reflections and debates; for which reason I have never once turned out of my way to observe those little cavils which have been made against it by envy or ignorance. The common fry of scribblers, who have no other way

of being taken notice of but by attacking what has gained some reputation in the world, would have furnished me with business enough, had they found me disposed to enter the lists with them.

I shall conclude with the fable of Boccalini's traveller, who was so pestered with the noise of grasshoppers in his ears, that he alighted from his horse in great wrath to kill them all. This, says the author, was troubling himself to no manner of purpose: had he pursued his journey without taking notice of them, the troublesome insects would have died of themselves in a very few weeks, and he would have suffered nothing from them.

The Spectator, No. 355. Thursday, April 17, 1712.

CVI

The Cat-Call

Tartaream intendit vocem, qua protinus omnis
Contremuit domus— VIRG.

I HAVE lately received the following letter from a country gentleman.

"MR. SPECTATOR—The night before I left London I went to see a play called *The Humorous Lieutenant*. Upon the rising of the curtain I was very much surprised with the great concert of cat-calls which was exhibited that evening, and began to think with myself that I had made a mistake, and gone to a music-meeting instead of the play-house. It appeared indeed a little

odd to me to see so many persons of quality of both sexes assembled together at a kind of caterwauling; for I cannot look upon that performance to have been anything better, whatever the musicians themselves might think of it. As I had no acquaintance in the house to ask questions of, and was forced to go out of town early the next morning, I could not learn the secret of this matter. What I would therefore desire of you, is, to give some account of this strange instrument, which I found the company called a cat-call; and particularly to let me know whether it be a piece of music lately come from Italy. For my own part, to be free with you, I would rather hear an English fiddle; though I durst not show my dislike whilst I was in the play-house, it being my chance to sit the very next man to one of the performers.—I am, sir, Your most affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN SHALLOW, Esq."

In compliance with 'Squire Shallow's request, I design this paper as a dissertation upon the cat-call. In order to make myself a master of the subject, I purchased one the beginning of last week, though not without great difficulty, being informed at two or three toy-shops that the players had lately bought them all up. I have since consulted many learned antiquaries in relation to its original, and find them very much divided among themselves upon that particular. A Fellow of the Royal Society, who is my good friend, and a great proficient in the mathematical part of

music, concludes from the simplicity of its make and the uniformity of its sound, that the cat-call is older than any of the inventions of Jubal. He observes very well, that musical instruments took their first rise from the notes of birds and other melodious animals; and what, says he, was more natural than for the first ages of mankind to imitate the voice of a cat that lived under the same roof with them? He added, that the cat had contributed more to harmony than any other animal; as we are not only beholden to her for this wind-instrument, but for our string-music in general.

Another virtuoso of my acquaintance will not allow the cat-call to be older than Thespis, and is apt to think it appeared in the world soon after the ancient comedy, for which reason it has still a place in our dramatic entertainments; nor must I here omit what a very curious gentleman, who is lately returned from his travels, has more than once assured me, namely, that there was lately dug up at Rome the statue of a Momus, who holds an instrument in his right hand very much resembling our modern cat-call.

There are others who ascribe this invention to Orpheus, and look upon the cat-call to be one of those instruments which that famous musician made use of to draw the beasts about him. It is certain, that the roasting of a cat does not call together a greater audience of that species than this instrument, if dexterously played upon in proper time and place.

But notwithstanding these various and learned conjectures, I cannot forbear thinking that the cat-call

is originally a piece of English music. Its resemblance to the voice of some of our British songsters, as well as the use of it, which is peculiar to our nation, confirms me in this opinion. It has at least received great improvements among us, whether we consider the instrument itself, or those several quavers and graces which are thrown into the playing of it. Every one might be sensible of this, who heard that remarkable overgrown cat-call which was placed in the centre of the pit, and presided over all the rest at the celebrated performance lately exhibited in Drury Lane.

Having said thus much concerning the original of the cat-call, we are in the next place to consider the use of it. The cat-call exerts itself to most advantage in the British theatre: it very much improves the sound of nonsense, and often goes along with the voice of the actor who pronounces it, as the violin or harpsichord accompanies the Italian recitativo.

It has often supplied the place of the ancient chorus, in the words of Mr. * * * In short, a bad poet has as great an antipathy to a cat-call, as many people have to a real cat.

Mr. Collier, in his ingenious essay upon music, has the following passage:

"I believe 'tis possible to invent an instrument that shall have a quite contrary effect to those martial ones now in use: an instrument that shall sink the spirits, and shake the nerves, and curdle the blood, and inspire despair, and cowardice and consternation, at a surprising rate. 'Tis probable the roaring of lions, the

warbling of cats and scritch-owls, together with a mixture of the howling of dogs, judiciously imitated and compounded, might go a great way in this invention. Whether such anti-music as this might not be of service in a camp, I shall leave to the military men to consider."

What this learned gentleman supposes in speculation, I have known actually verified in practice. The cat-call has struck a damp into generals, and frighted heroes off the stage. At the first sound of it I have seen a crowned head tremble, and a princess fall into fits. The Humorous Lieutenant[1] himself could not stand it; nay, I am told that even Almanzor looked like a mouse, and trembled at the voice of this terrifying instrument.

As it is of a dramatic nature, and peculiarly appropriated to the stage, I can by no means approve the thought of that angry lover, who, after an unsuccessful pursuit of some years, took leave of his mistress in a serenade of cat-calls.

I must conclude this paper with the account I have lately received of an ingenious artist, who has long studied this instrument, and is very well versed in all the rules of the drama. He teaches to play on it by book, and to express by it the whole art of criticism. He has his base and his treble cat-call; the former for tragedy, the latter for comedy; only in tragi-comedies they may both play together in concert. He has a

[1] The reference is to the play of that name by Beaumont and Fletcher.

particular squeak to denote the violation of each of the unities, and has different sounds to show whether he aims at the poet or the player. In short, he teaches the smut-note, the fustian-note, the stupid-note, and has composed a kind of air that may serve as an act-tune to an incorrigible play, and which takes in the whole compass of the cat-call.

The Spectator, No. 361. Thursday, April 24, 1712.

CVII

The Practical Joker

Jamne igitur laudas quod de sapientibus alter
Ridebat ?— Juv.

I SHALL communicate to my reader the following letter for the entertainment of this day.

"SIR—You know very well that our nation is more famous for that sort of men who are called Whims and Humourists, than any other country in the world; for which reason it is observed that our English comedy excels that of all other nations in the novelty and variety of its characters.

"Among those innumerable sets of Whims which our country produces, there are none whom I have regarded with more curiosity than those who have invented any particular kind of diversion for the entertainment of themselves or their friends. My letter shall single out those who take delight in sorting

a company that has something of burlesque and ridicule in its appearance. I shall make myself understood by the following example. One of the wits of the last age, who was a man of a good estate, thought he never laid out his money better than in a jest. As he was one year at the Bath, observing that in the great confluence of fine people there were several among them with long chins, a part of the visage by which he himself was very much distinguished, he invited to dinner half a score of these remarkable persons who had their mouths in the middle of their faces. They had no sooner placed themselves about the table, but they began to stare upon one another, not being able to imagine what had brought them together. Our English proverb says,

'Tis merry in the hall,
When beards wag all.

It proved so in the assembly I am now speaking of, who seeing so many peaks of faces agitated with eating, drinking, and discourse, and observing all the chins that were present meeting together very often over the centre of the table, every one grew sensible of the jest, and came into it with so much good-humour, that they lived in strict friendship and alliance from that day forward.

"The same gentleman some time after packed together a set of oglers, as he called them, consisting of such as had an unlucky cast in their eyes. His diversion on this occasion was to see the cross bows,

mistaken signs, and wrong connivances that passed amidst so many broken and refracted rays of sight.

"The third feast which this merry gentleman exhibited was to the stammerers, whom he got together in a sufficient body to fill his table. He had ordered one of his servants, who was placed behind a screen, to write down their table-talk, which was very easy to be done without the help of shorthand. It appears by the notes which were taken, that though their conversation never fell, there were not above twenty words spoken during the first course; that upon serving up the second, one of the company was a quarter of an hour in telling them that the ducklings and asparagus were very good; and that another took up the same time in declaring himself of the same opinion. This jest did not, however, go off so well as the former; for one of the guests being a brave man, and fuller of resentment than he knew how to express, went out of the room, and sent the facetious inviter a challenge in writing, which, though it was afterwards dropped by the interposition of friends, put a stop to these ludicrous entertainments.

"Now, sir, I daresay you will agree with me, that as there is no moral in these jests, they ought to be discouraged, and looked upon rather as pieces of unluckiness than wit. However, as it is natural for one man to refine upon the thought of another, and impossible for any single person, how great soever his parts may be, to invent an art and bring it to its utmost perfection, I shall here give you an account of an

honest gentleman of my acquaintance, who, upon hearing the character of the wit above-mentioned, has himself assumed it, and endeavoured to convert it to the benefit of mankind. He invited half a dozen of his friends one day to dinner, who were each of them famous for inserting several redundant phrases in their discourse, as 'D'ye hear me,' 'D'ye see,' 'That is,' 'And so, sir.' Each of the guests making frequent use of his particular elegance, appeared so ridiculous to his neighbour, that he could not but reflect upon himself as appearing equally ridiculous to the rest of the company: by this means, before they had sat long together, every one talking with the greatest circumspection, and carefully avoiding his favourite expletive, the conversation was cleared of its redundancies, and had a greater quantity of sense, though less of sound in it.

"The same well-meaning gentleman took occasion, at another time, to bring together such of his friends as were addicted to a foolish habitual custom of swearing. In order to show them the absurdity of the practice, he had recourse to the invention above-mentioned, having placed an amanuensis in a private part of the room. After the second bottle, when men open their minds without reserve, my honest friend began to take notice of the many sonorous but unnecessary words that had passed in his house since their sitting down at table, and how much good conversation they had lost by giving way to such superfluous phrases. 'What a tax,' says he, 'would they have raised for

the poor, had we put the laws in execution upon one another?' Every one of them took this gentle reproof in good part: upon which he told them, that knowing their conversation would have no secrets in it, he had ordered it to be taken down in writing, and for the humour-sake would read it to them, if they pleased. There were ten sheets of it, which might have been reduced to two, had there not been those abominable interpolations I have before mentioned. Upon the reading of it in cold blood, it looked rather like a conference of fiends than of men. In short, every one trembled at himself upon hearing calmly what he had pronounced amidst the heat and inadvertency of discourse.

"I shall only mention another occasion wherein he made use of the same invention to cure a different kind of men, who are the pests of all polite conversation, and murder time as much as either of the two former, though they do it more innocently; I mean that dull generation of story-tellers. My friend got together about half a dozen of his acquaintance, who were infected with this strange malady. The first day, one of them sitting down entered upon the siege of Namur, which lasted till four o'clock, their time of parting. The second day a North Briton took possession of the discourse, which it was impossible to get out of his hands so long as the company stayed together. The third day was engrossed after the same manner by a story of the same length. They at last began to reflect upon this barbarous way of treating one another, and

by this means awakened out of that lethargy with which each of them had been seized for several years.

"As you have somewhere declared, that extraordinary and uncommon characters of mankind are the game which you delight in, and as I look upon you to be the greatest sportsman, or, if you please, the Nimrod, among this species of writers, I thought this discovery would not be unacceptable to you.—I am, sir," etc.

The Spectator, No. 371. Tuesday, May 6, 1712.

CVIII

Dying for Love

Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis
Cautum est in horas— HOR.

LOVE was the mother of poetry, and still produces, among the most ignorant and barbarous, a thousand imaginary distresses and poetical complaints. It makes a footman talk like Oroondates, and converts a brutal rustic into a gentle swain. The most ordinary plebeian or mechanic in love bleeds and pines away with a certain elegance and tenderness of sentiments which this passion naturally inspires.

These inward languishings of a mind infected with this softness, have given birth to a phrase which is made use of by all the melting tribe, from the highest to the lowest, I mean that of "dying for love."

Romances, which owe their very being to this passion, are full of these metaphorical deaths. Heroes and heroines, knights, squires, and damsels, are all of them in a dying condition. There is the same kind of mortality in our modern tragedies, where every one gasps, faints, bleeds, and dies. Many of the poets, to describe the execution which is done by this passion, represent the fair sex as basilisks that destroy with their eyes; but I think Mr. Cowley has with greater justness of thought compared a beautiful woman to a porcupine, that sends an arrow from every part.

I have often thought, that there is no way so effectual for the cure of this general infirmity, as a man's reflecting upon the motives that produce it. When the passion proceeds from the sense of any virtue or perfection in the persons beloved, I would by no means discourage it; but if a man considers that all his heavy complaints of wounds and deaths rise from some little affectations of coquetry, which are improved into charms by his own fond imagination, the very laying before himself the cause of his distemper, may be sufficient to effect the cure of it.

It is in this view that I have looked over the several bundles of letters which I have received from dying people, and composed out of them the following bill of mortality, which I shall lay before my reader without any further preface, as hoping that it may be useful to him in discovering those several places where there is most danger, and those fatal arts which are made use of to destroy the heedless and unwary.

Lysander, slain at a puppet-show on the third of September.

Thyrsis, shot from a casement in Piccadilly.

T. S., wounded by Zelinda's scarlet stocking, as she was stepping out of a coach.

Will Simple, smitten at the opera by the glance of an eye that was aimed at one who stood by him.

Thos. Vainlove, lost his life at a ball.

Tim. Tattle, killed by the tap of a fan on his left shoulder by Coquetilla, as he was talking carelessly with her in a bow-window.

Sir Simon Softly, murdered at the play-house in Drury Lane by a frown.

Philander, mortally wounded by Cleora, as she was adjusting her tucker.

Ralph Gapely, Esq., hit by a random shot at the ring.

F. R., caught his death upon the water, April the 1st.

W. W., killed by an unknown hand, that was playing with the glove off upon the side of the front-box in Drury Lane.

Sir Christopher Crazy, Bart., hurt by the brush of a whalebone petticoat.

Sylvius, shot through the sticks of a fan at St. James's church.

Damon, struck through the heart by a diamond necklace.

Thomas Trusty, Francis Goosequill, William Meanwell, Edward Callow, Esqrs., standing in a row, fell all four at the same time by an ogle of the Widow Trapland.

Tom Rattle, chancing to tread upon a lady's tail as he came out of the play-house, she turned full upon him, and laid him dead upon the spot.

Dick Tastewell, slain by a blush from the Queen's box in the third act of the *Trip to the Jubilee*.

Samuel Felt, haberdasher, wounded in his walk to Islington by Mrs. Susannah Crossstitch, as she was clambering over a stile.

R. F., T. W., S. I., M. P., etc., put to death in the last birthday massacre.

Roger Blinko, cut off in the twenty-first year of his age by a whitewash.

Musidorus, slain by an arrow that flew out of a dimple in Belinda's left cheek.

Ned Courtly, presenting Flavia with her glove (which she had dropped on purpose), she received it and took away his life with a curtsey.

John Gosselin, having received a slight hurt from a pair of blue eyes, as he was making his escape was dispatched by a smile.

Strephon, killed by Clarinda as she looked down into the pit.

Charles Careless, shot flying by a girl of fifteen, who unexpectedly popped her head upon him out of a coach.

Josiah Wither, aged threescore and three, sent to his long home by Elizabeth Jettwell, spinster.

Jack Freelove, murdered by Melissa in her hair.

William Wiseacre, Gent., drowned in a flood of tears by Moll Common.

John Pleadwell, Esq. of the Middle Temple, barrister at law, assassinated in his chambers the sixth instant by Kitty Sly, who pretended to come to him for his advice.

The Spectator, No. 377. Tuesday, May 13, 1712.

CIX

Sir Roger de Coverley at Spring Garden

Criminibus debent hortos—HOR.

As I was sitting in my chamber, and thinking on a subject for my next *Spectator*, I heard two or three irregular bounces at my landlady's door, and upon the opening of it, a loud cheerful voice inquiring whether the philosopher was at home. The child who went to the door answered very innocently, that he did not lodge there. I immediately recollected that it was my good friend Sir Roger's voice; and that I had promised to go with him on the water to Spring Garden, in case it proved a good evening. The knight put me in mind of my promise from the bottom of the staircase, but told me that if I was speculating he would stay below till I had done. Upon my coming down, I found all the children of the family got about my old friend, and my landlady herself, who is a notable prating gossip, engaged in a conference with him; being mightily pleased with his stroking her little boy upon the head, and bidding him be a good child and mind his book.

We were no sooner come to the Temple-stairs, but we were surrounded with a crowd of watermen, offering their respective services. Sir Roger, after having looked about him very attentively, spied one with a wooden leg, and immediately gave him orders to get his boat ready. As we were walking towards it, "You must know," says Sir Roger, "I never make use of anybody to row me, that has not either lost a leg or an arm. I would rather bate him a few strokes of his oar, than not employ an honest man that has been wounded in the Queen's service. If I was a lord or a bishop, and kept a barge, I would not put a fellow in my livery that had not a wooden leg."

My old friend, after having seated himself and trimmed the boat with his coachman, who, being a very sober man, always serves for ballast on these occasions, we made the best of our way for Fox-hall.[1] Sir Roger obliged the waterman to give us the history of his right leg, and hearing that he had left it at La Hogue, with many particulars which passed in that glorious action, the knight in the triumph of his heart made several reflections on the greatness of the British nation; as that one Englishman could beat three Frenchmen; that we could never be in danger of

[1] Vauxhall. The gardens at Vauxhall, on the Surrey side of the Thames, over against Millbank, were formed about 1661. They were called the New Spring Gardens to distinguish them from the Old Spring Gardens at Charing Cross. They retained the name of Spring Gardens till 1785, when the name was changed to Vauxhall Gardens. The form Fox-hall instead of Vauxhall is used by Pepys. See H. B. Wheatley, *London, Past and Present* (London, 1891), iii. 426 *sqq.*

popery so long as we took care of our fleet; that the Thames was the noblest river in Europe; that London bridge was a greater piece of work than any of the seven wonders of the world; with many other honest prejudices which naturally cleave to the heart of a true Englishman.

After some short pause, the old knight, turning about his head twice or thrice to take a survey of this great metropolis, bid me observe how thick the city was set with churches, and that there was scarce a single steeple on this side Temple-bar. "A most heathenish sight!" says Sir Roger. "There is no religion at this end of the town. The fifty new churches will very much mend the prospect; but church-work is slow, church-work is slow!"

I do not remember I have anywhere mentioned, in Sir Roger's character, his custom of saluting everybody that passes by him with a good-morrow or a good-night. This the old man does out of the overflowings of his humanity, though at the same time it renders him so popular among all his country neighbours, that it is thought to have gone a good way in making him once or twice knight of the shire. He cannot forbear this exercise of benevolence even in town, when he meets with any one in his morning or evening walk. It broke from him to several boats that passed by us upon the water; but to the knight's great surprise, as he gave the good-night to two or three young fellows a little before our landing, one of them, instead of returning the civility, asked us what queer old put we had in the

boat, and whether he was not ashamed to go a wenching at his years? with a great deal of the like Thames ribaldry. Sir Roger seemed a little shocked at first, but at length, assuming a face of magistracy, told us "that if he were a Middlesex justice, he would make such vagrants know that her Majesty's subjects were no more to be abused by water than by land."

We were now arrived at Spring Garden, which is exquisitely pleasant at this time of year. When I considered the fragrancy of the walks and bowers, with the choirs of birds that sung upon the trees, and the loose tribe of people that walked under their shades, I could not but look upon the place as a kind of Mahometan paradise. Sir Roger told me it put him in mind of a little coppice by his house in the country, which his chaplain used to call an aviary of nightingales. "You must understand," says the knight, "there is nothing in the world that pleases a man in love so much as your nightingale. Ah, MR. SPECTATOR! the many moonlight nights that I have walked by myself, and thought on the widow by the music of the nightingale!" Here he fetched a deep sigh, and was falling into a fit of musing, when a mask, who came behind him, gave him a gentle tap upon the shoulder, and asked him if he would drink a bottle of mead with her? But the knight, being startled at so unexpected a familiarity, and displeased to be interrupted in his thoughts of the widow, told her, "She was a wanton baggage," and bid her go about her business.

We concluded our walk with a glass of Burton ale

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and a slice of hung-beef. When we had done eating ourselves, the knight called a waiter to him, and bid him carry the remainder to the waterman that had but one leg. I perceived the fellow stared upon him at the oddness of the message, and was going to be saucy; upon which I ratified the knight's commands with a peremptory look.

As we were going out of the garden, my old friend, thinking himself obliged, as a member of the quorum, to animadvert upon the morals of the place, told the mistress of the house, who sat at the bar, that he should be a better customer to her garden if there were more nightingales and fewer strumpets.

The Spectator, No. 383. Tuesday, May 20, 1712.

CX

The Prayers of Mortals

—Non tu prece poscis emaci,
Quae nisi seductis nequeas committere Divis;
At bona pars procerum tacita libabit acerra.
Haud cuivis promptum est murmurque humilesque susurros
Tollere de templis et aperto vivere voto.
"Mens bona, fama, fides," haec clare, et ut audiat hospes,
Illa sibi introrsum et sub lingua immurmurat: "O si
Ebulliat patruus, praeclarum funus!" Et "O si
Sub rastro crepet argenti mihi seria dextro
Hercule! pupillumve utinam, quem proximus haeres
Impello, expungam!"— PERS.

WHERE Homer represents Phoenix, the tutor of Achilles, as persuading his pupil to lay aside his

resentments and give himself up to the entreaties of his countrymen, the poet, in order to make him speak in character, ascribes to him a speech full of those fables and allegories which old men take delight in relating, and which are very proper for instruction. "The gods," says he, "suffer themselves to be prevailed upon by entreaties. When mortals have offended them by their transgressions, they appease them by vows and sacrifices. You must know, Achilles, that Prayers are the daughters of Jupiter. They are crippled by frequent kneeling, have their faces full of cares and wrinkles, and their eyes always cast towards heaven. They are constant attendants on the goddess Ate, and march behind her. This goddess walks forward with a bold and haughty air, and being very light of foot, runs through the whole earth, grieving and afflicting the sons of men. She gets the start of Prayers, who always follow her in order to heal those persons whom she wounds. He who honours these daughters of Jupiter, when they draw near to him, receives great benefit from them; but as for him who rejects them, they entreat their father to give his orders to the goddess Ate to punish him for his hardness of heart." This noble allegory needs but little explanation; for whether the goddess Ate signifies injury, as some have explained it, or guilt in general, as others, or Divine justice, as I am the more apt to think, the interpretation is obvious enough.

I shall produce another heathen fable relating to prayers, which is of a more diverting kind. One would

think by some passages in it, that it was composed by Lucian, or at least by some author who has endeavoured to imitate his way of writing; but as dissertations of this nature are more curious than useful, I shall give my reader the fable without any further inquiries after the author.

"Menippus the philosopher was a second time taken up into heaven by Jupiter, when for his entertainment he lifted up a trap-door that was placed by his footstool. At its rising, there issued through it such a din of cries as astonished the philosopher. Upon his asking what they meant, Jupiter told him they were the prayers that were sent up to him from the earth. Menippus, amidst the confusion of voices, which was so great that nothing less than the ear of Jove could distinguish them, heard the words, Riches, Honour, and Long Life, repeated in several different tones and languages. When the first hubbub of sounds was over, the trap-door being left open, the voices came up more separate and distinct. The first prayer was a very odd one, it came from Athens, and desired Jupiter to increase the wisdom and the beard of his humble supplicant. Menippus knew it by the voice to be the prayer of his friend Licander the philosopher. This was succeeded by the petition of one who had just laden a ship, and promised Jupiter, if he took care of it, and returned it home again full of riches, he would make him an offering of a silver cup. Jupiter thanked him for nothing; and bending down his ear more attentively than ordinary, heard a voice complaining to him of the cruelty of an Ephesian

widow, and begging him to breed compassion in her heart: 'This,' says Jupiter, 'is a very honest fellow; I have received a great deal of incense from him; I will not be so cruel to him as to hear his prayers.' He was then interrupted with a whole volley of vows, which were made for the health of a tyrannical prince by his subjects, who prayed for him in his presence. Menippus was surprised, after having listened to prayers offered up with so much ardour and devotion, to hear low whispers from the same assembly, expostulating with Jove for suffering such a tyrant to live, and asking him how his thunder could lie idle? Jupiter was so offended at these prevaricating rascals, that he took down the first vows, and puffed away the last. The philosopher, seeing a great cloud mounting upwards and making its way directly to the trap-door, inquired of Jupiter what it meant. 'This,' says Jupiter, 'is the smoke of a whole hecatomb that is offered me by the general of an army, who is very importunate with me to let him cut off an hundred thousand men that are drawn up in array against him: what does the impudent wretch think I see in him, to believe that I will make a sacrifice of so many mortals as good as himself, and all this to his glory, forsooth? But hark,' says Jupiter, 'there is a voice I never heard but in time of danger: 'tis a rogue that is shipwrecked in the Ionian Sea: I saved him on a plank but three days ago, upon his promise to mend his manners; the scoundrel is not worth a groat, and yet has the impudence to offer me a temple if I will keep him from sinking——— But

yonder,' says he, 'is a special youth for you; he desires me to take his father, who keeps a great estate from him, out of the miseries of human life. The old fellow shall live till he makes his heart ache, I can tell him that for his pains.' This was followed by the soft voice of a pious lady, desiring Jupiter that she might appear amiable and charming in the sight of her emperor. As the philosopher was reflecting on this extraordinary petition, there blew a gentle wind through the trap-door, which he at first mistook for a gale of zephyrs, but afterwards found it to be a breeze of sighs: they smelt strong of flowers and incense, and were succeeded by most passionate complaints of wounds and torments, fires and arrows, cruelty, despair, and death. Menippus fancied that such lamentable cries arose from some general execution, or from wretches lying under the torture; but Jupiter told him that they came up to him from the isle of Paphos, and that he every day received complaints of the same nature from that whimsical tribe of mortals who are called lovers. 'I am so trifled with,' says he, 'by this generation of both sexes, and find it so impossible to please them, whether I grant or refuse their petitions, that I shall order a western wind for the future to intercept them in their passage, and blow them at random upon the earth.' The last petition I heard was from a very aged man of near an hundred years old, begging but for one year more of life, and then promising to die contented. 'This is the rarest old fellow!' says Jupiter. 'He has made this prayer to me for above twenty years together.

When he was but fifty years old, he desired only that he might live to see his son settled in the world; I granted it. He then begged the same favour for his daughter, and afterwards that he might see the education of a grandson: when all this was brought about, he puts up a petition that he might live to finish a house he was building. In short, he is an unreasonable old cur, and never wants an excuse; I will hear no more of him.' Upon which he flung down the trap-door in a passion, and was resolved to give no more audiences that day."

Notwithstanding the levity of this fable, the moral of it very well deserves our attention, and is the same with that which has been inculcated by Socrates and Plato, not to mention Juvenal and Persius, who have each of them made the finest satire in their whole works upon this subject. The vanity of men's wishes, which are the natural prayers of the mind, as well as many of those secret devotions which they offer to the Supreme Being, are sufficiently exposed by it. Among other reasons for set forms of prayer, I have often thought it a very good one, that by this means the folly and extravagance of men's desires may be kept within due bounds, and not break out in absurd and ridiculous petitions on so great and solemn an occasion.

The Spectator, No. 391. Thursday, May 29, 1712.

CXI

Vernal Delight

Nescio qua praeter solitum dulcedine laeti.—VIRG.

LOOKING over the letters that have been sent me, I chanced to find the following one, which I received about two years ago from an ingenious friend, who was then in Denmark.

"*Copenhagen, May* 1, 1710.

"DEAR SIR—The spring with you has already taken possession of the fields and woods: now is the season of solitude, and of moving complaints upon trivial sufferings: now the griefs of lovers begin to flow, and their wounds to bleed afresh. I too, at this distance from the softer climates, am not without my discontents at present. You perhaps may laugh at me for a most romantic wretch, when I have disclosed to you the occasion of my uneasiness; and yet I cannot help thinking my unhappiness real, in being confined to a region which is the very reverse of Paradise. The seasons here are all of them unpleasant, and the country quite destitute of rural charms. I have not heard a bird sing, nor a brook murmur, nor a breeze whisper, neither have I been blest with the sight of a flowery meadow these two years. Every wind here is a tempest, and every water a turbulent ocean. I hope, when you reflect a little, you will not think the grounds of my complaint in the least frivolous and unbecoming

a man of serious thought; since the love of woods, of fields and flowers, of rivers and fountains, seems to be a passion implanted in our natures the most early of any, even before the fair sex had a being.—I am, sir," etc.

Could I transport myself with a wish from one country to another, I should choose to pass my winter in Spain, my spring in Italy, my summer in England, and my autumn in France. Of all these seasons there is none that can vie with the spring for beauty and delightfulness. It bears the same figure among the seasons of the year, that the morning does among the divisions of the day, or youth among the stages of life. The English summer is pleasanter than that of any other country in Europe, on no other account but because it has a greater mixture of spring in it. The mildness of our climate, with those frequent refreshments of dews and rains that fall among us, keep up a perpetual cheerfulness in our fields, and fill the hottest months of the year with a lively verdure.

In the opening of the spring, when all nature begins to recover herself, the same animal pleasure which makes the birds sing and the whole brute creation rejoice, rises very sensibly in the heart of man. I know none of the poets who have observed so well as Milton those secret overflowings of gladness which diffuse themselves through the mind of the beholder, upon surveying the gay scenes of nature: he has touched upon it twice or thrice in his *Paradise Lost*, and describes it very beautifully under the name of

vernal delight, in that passage where he represents the devil himself as almost sensible of it.

> Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue
> Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixt;
> On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
> Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
> When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed
> That landscape: and of pure now purer air
> Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
> Vernal delight, and joy able to drive
> All sadness, but despair, &c.

Many authors have written on the vanity of the creature, and represented the barrenness of everything in this world, and its incapacity of producing any solid or substantial happiness. As discourses of this nature are very useful to the sensual and voluptuous, those speculations which show the bright side of things, and lay forth those innocent entertainments which are to be met with among the several objects that encompass us, are no less beneficial to men of dark and melancholy tempers. It was for this reason that I endeavoured to recommend a cheerfulness of mind in my two last Saturday's papers, and which I would still inculcate, not only from the consideration of ourselves and of that Being on whom we depend, nor from the general survey of that universe in which we are placed at present, but from reflections on the particular season in which this paper is written. The creation is a perpetual feast to the mind of a good man, everything he sees cheers and delights him; Providence has imprinted so many smiles on nature, that it is impossible

for a mind, which is not sunk in more gross and sensual delights, to take a survey of them without several secret sensations of pleasure. The Psalmist has in several of his divine poems celebrated those beautiful and agreeable scenes which make the heart glad, and produce in it that vernal delight which I have before taken notice of.

Natural philosophy quickens this taste of the creation, and renders it not only pleasing to the imagination, but to the understanding. It does not rest in the murmur of brooks and the melody of birds, in the shade of groves and woods, or in the embroidery of fields and meadows, but considers the several ends of Providence which are served by them, and the wonders of divine wisdom which appear in them. It heightens the pleasures of the eye, and raises such a rational admiration in the soul as is little inferior to devotion.

It is not in the power of every one to offer up this kind of worship to the great Author of nature, and to indulge these more refined meditations of heart, which are doubtless highly acceptable in his sight; I shall therefore conclude this short essay on that pleasure which the mind naturally conceives from the present season of the year, by the recommending of a practice for which every one has sufficient abilities.

I would have my readers endeavour to moralize this natural pleasure of the soul, and to improve this vernal delight, as Milton calls it, into a Christian virtue. When we find ourselves inspired with this pleasing instinct, this secret satisfaction and complacency

arising from the beauties of the creation, let us consider to whom we stand indebted for all these entertainments of sense, and who it is that thus opens his hand and fills the world with good. The apostle instructs us to take advantage of our present temper of mind, to graft upon it such a religious exercise as is particularly conformable to it, by that precept which advises those who are sad to pray, and those who are merry to sing psalms. The cheerfulness of heart which springs up in us from the survey of nature's works, is an admirable preparation for gratitude. The mind has gone a great way towards praise and thanksgiving, that is filled with such a secret gladness: a grateful reflection on the Supreme Cause who produces it, sanctifies it in the soul, and gives it its proper value. Such an habitual disposition of mind consecrates every field and wood, turns an ordinary walk into a morning or evening sacrifice, and will improve those transient gleams of joy, which naturally brighten up and refresh the soul on such occasions, into an inviolable and perpetual state of bliss and happiness.

The Spectator, No. 393. Saturday, May 31, 1712.

CXII

Coffee-House Politicians

Qui mores hominum multorum vidit—Hor.

When I consider this great city in its several quarters and divisions, I look upon it as an aggregate of various

nations distinguished from each other by their respective customs, manners, and interests. The courts of two countries do not so much differ from one another, as the court and city in their peculiar ways of life and conversation. In short, the inhabitants of St. James's, notwithstanding they live under the same laws, and speak the same language, are a distinct people from those of Cheapside, who are likewise removed from those of the Temple on the one side, and those of Smithfield on the other, by several climates and degrees in their way of thinking and conversing together.

For this reason, when any public affair is upon the anvil, I love to hear the reflections that arise upon it in the several districts and parishes of London and Westminster, and to ramble up and down a whole day together, in order to make myself acquainted with the opinions of my ingenious countrymen. By this means I know the faces of all the principal politicians within the bills of mortality ; and as every coffee-house has some particular statesman belonging to it, who is the mouth of the street where he lives, I always take care to place myself near him, in order to know his judgment on the present posture of affairs. The last progress that I made with this intention was about three months ago, when we had a current report of the king of France's death. As I foresaw this would produce a new face of things in Europe, and many curious speculations in our British coffee-houses, I was very desirous to learn the thoughts of our most eminent politicians on that occasion.

That I might begin as near the fountain-head as possible, I first of all called in at St. James's, where I found the whole outward room in a buzz of politics. The speculations were but very indifferent towards the door, but grew finer as you advanced to the upper end of the room, and were so very much improved by a knot of theorists who sat in the inner room, within the steams of the coffee-pot, that I there heard the whole Spanish monarchy disposed of, and all the line of Bourbon provided for in less than a quarter of an hour.

I afterwards called in at Giles's, where I saw a board of French gentlemen sitting upon the life and death of their *Grand Monarque*. Those among them who had espoused the Whig interest, very positively affirmed that he departed this life about a week since, and therefore proceeded without any further delay to the release of their friends on the galleys and to their own re-establishment; but finding they could not agree among themselves, I proceeded on my intended progress.

Upon my arrival at Jenny Man's, I saw an alert young fellow that cocked his hat upon a friend of his who entered just at the same time with myself, and accosted him after the following manner: "Well, Jack, the old prig is dead at last. Sharp's the word. Now or never, boy. Up to the walls of Paris directly." With several other deep reflections of the same nature.

I met with very little variation in the politics between Charing Cross and Covent Garden. And upon my going into Will's I found their discourse was gone

off from the death of the French king to that of Monsieur Boileau, Racine, Corneille, and several other poets, whom they regretted on this occasion, as persons who would have obliged the world with very noble elegies on the death of so great a prince and so eminent a patron of learning.

At a coffee-house near the Temple, I found a couple of young gentlemen engaged very smartly in a dispute on the succession to the Spanish monarchy. One of them seemed to have been retained as advocate for the Duke of Anjou, the other for his Imperial Majesty. They were both for regulating the title to that kingdom by the statute laws of England; but finding them going out of my depth, I passed forward to Paul's Churchyard, where I listened with great attention to a learned man, who gave the company an account of the deplorable state of France during the minority of the deceased king.

I then turned on my right hand into Fish Street, where the chief politician of that quarter, upon hearing the news (after having taken a pipe of tobacco, and ruminating for some time), "If," says he, "the king of France is certainly dead, we shall have plenty of mackerel this season; our fishery will not be disturbed by privateers, as it has been for these ten years past." He afterwards considered how the death of this great man would affect our pilchards, and by several other remarks infused a general joy into his whole audience.

I afterwards entered a by-coffee-house that stood at the upper end of a narrow lane, where I met with a

Nonjuror, engaged very warmly with a lace-man who was the great support of a neighbouring conventicle. The matter in debate was whether the late French king was most like Augustus Caesar or Nero. The controversy was carried on with great heat on both sides, and as each of them looked upon me very frequently during the course of their debate, I was under some apprehension that they would appeal to me, and therefore laid down my penny at the bar, and made the best of my way to Cheapside.

I here gazed upon the signs for some time before I found one to my purpose. The first object I met in the coffee-room was a person who expressed a great grief for the death of the French king; but upon his explaining himself, I found his sorrow did not arise from the loss of the monarch, but for his having sold out of the bank about three days before he heard the news of it; upon which a haberdasher, who was the oracle of the coffee-house, and had his circle of admirers about him, called several to witness that he had declared his opinion above a week before, that the French king was certainly dead; to which he added, that considering the late advices we had received from France, it was impossible that it could be otherwise. As he was laying these together, and dictating to his hearers with great authority, there came in a gentleman from Garraway's, who told us that there were several letters from France just come in, with advice that the king was in good health, and was gone out a-hunting the very morning the post came away: upon which

the haberdasher stole off his hat that hung upon a wooden peg by him, and retired to his shop with great confusion. This intelligence put a stop to my travels, which I had prosecuted with much satisfaction; not being a little pleased to hear so many different opinions upon so great an event, and to observe how naturally upon such a piece of news every one is apt to consider it with a regard to his own particular interest and advantage.

The Spectator, No. 403. Thursday, June 12, 1712.

CXIII

The Coldness of English Oratory

—Abest facundis gratia dictis.—Ovid.

Most foreign writers who have given any character of the English nation, whatever vices they ascribe to it, allow in general, that the people are naturally modest. It proceeds perhaps from this our national virtue, that our orators are observed to make use of less gesture or action than those of other countries. Our preachers stand stock-still in the pulpit, and will not so much as move a finger to set off the best sermons in the world. We meet with the same speaking statues at our bars, and in all public places of debate. Our words flow from us in a smooth continued stream, without those strainings of the voice, motions of the body, and majesty of the hand, which are so much celebrated in the orators of Greece and Rome. We

can talk of life and death in cold blood, and keep our temper in a discourse which turns upon everything that is dear to us. Though our zeal breaks out in the finest tropes and figures, it is not able to stir a limb about us. I have heard it observed more than once by those who have seen Italy, that an untravelled Englishman cannot relish all the beauties of Italian pictures, because the postures which are expressed in them are often such as are peculiar to that country. One who has not seen an Italian in the pulpit, will not know what to make of that noble gesture in Raphael's picture of St. Paul preaching at Athens, where the apostle is represented as lifting up both his arms, and pouring out the thunder of his rhetoric amidst an audience of pagan philosophers.

It is certain that proper gestures and vehement exertions of the voice cannot be too much studied by a public orator. They are a kind of comment to what he utters, and enforce everything he says, with weak hearers, better than the strongest argument he can make use of. They keep the audience awake, and fix their attention to what is delivered to them, at the same time that they show the speaker is in earnest, and affected himself with what he so passionately recommends to others. Violent gesture and vociferation naturally shake the hearts of the ignorant, and fill them with a kind of religious horror. Nothing is more frequent than to see women weep and tremble at the sight of a moving preacher, though he is placed quite out of their hearing; as in England we very frequently

see people lulled asleep with solid and elaborate discourses of piety, who would be warmed and transported out of themselves by the bellowings and distortions of enthusiasm.

If nonsense, when accompanied with such an emotion of voice and body, has such an influence on men's minds, what might we not expect from many of those admirable discourses which are printed in our tongue, were they delivered with a becoming fervour, and with the most agreeable graces of voice and gesture?

We are told that the great Latin orator very much impaired his health by this *laterum contentio*, this vehemence of action, with which he used to deliver himself. The Greek orator was likewise so very famous for this particular in rhetoric, that one of his antagonists, whom he had banished from Athens, reading over the oration which had procured his banishment, and seeing his friends admire it, could not forbear asking them, if they were so much affected by the bare reading of it, how much more they would have been alarmed, had they heard him actually throwing out such a storm of eloquence?

How cold and dead a figure, in comparison of these two great men, does an orator often make at the British bar, holding up his head with the most insipid serenity, and stroking the sides of a long wig that reaches down to his middle? The truth of it is, there is often nothing more ridiculous than the gestures of an English speaker; you see some of them running their hands into their

pockets as far as ever they can thrust them, and others looking with great attention on a piece of paper that has nothing written in it; you may see many a smart rhetorician turning his hat in his hands, moulding it into several different cocks, examining sometimes the lining of it and sometimes the button, during the whole course of his harangue. A deaf man would think he was cheapening a beaver, when perhaps he is talking of the fate of the British nation. I remember, when I was a young man, and used to frequent Westminster Hall, there was a counsellor who never pleaded without a piece of pack-thread in his hand, which he used to twist about a thumb or a finger all the while he was speaking: the wags of those days used to call it the thread of his discourse, for he was not able to utter a word without it. One of his clients, who was more merry than wise, stole it from him one day in the midst of his pleading; but he had better have let it alone, for he lost his cause by his jest.

I have all along acknowledged myself to be a dumb man, and therefore may be thought a very improper person to give rules for oratory; but I believe every one will agree with me in this, that we ought either to lay aside all kinds of gesture (which seems to be very suitable to the genius of our nation), or at least to make use of such only as are graceful and expressive.

The Spectator, No. 407. Tuesday, June 17, 1712.

CXIV

Fine Taste of Writing

—*Musaeo contingere cuncta lepore.*—LUCR.

GRATIAN very often recommends the fine taste as the utmost perfection of an accomplished man. As this word arises very often in conversation, I shall endeavour to give some account of it, and to lay down rules how we may know whether we are possessed of it, and how we may acquire that fine taste of writing, which is so much talked of among the polite world.

Most languages make use of this metaphor to express that faculty of the mind, which distinguishes all the most concealed faults and nicest perfections in writing. We may be sure this metaphor would not have been so general in all tongues, had there not been a very great conformity between that mental taste, which is the subject of this paper, and that sensitive taste which gives us a relish of every different flavour that affects the palate. Accordingly we find, there are as many degrees of refinement in the intellectual faculty as in the sense which is marked out by this common denomination.

I knew a person who possessed the one in so great a perfection, that after having tasted ten different kinds of tea, he would distinguish, without seeing the colour of it, the particular sort which was offered him; and not only so, but any two sorts of them that were mixed

together in an equal proportion; nay, he has carried the experiment so far as, upon tasting the composition of three different sorts, to name the parcels from whence the three several ingredients were taken. A man of a fine taste in writing will discern, after the same manner, not only the general beauties and imperfections of an author, but discover the several ways of thinking and expressing himself, which diversify him from all other authors, with the several foreign infusions of thought and language, and the particular authors from whom they were borrowed.

After having thus far explained what is generally meant by a fine taste in writing, and shown the propriety of the metaphor which is used on this occasion, I think I may define it to be *that faculty of the soul which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike.* If a man would know whether he is possessed of this faculty, I would have him read over the celebrated works of antiquity, which have stood the test of so many different ages and countries; or those works among the moderns which have the sanction of the politer part of our contemporaries. If upon the perusal of such writings he does not find himself delighted in an extraordinary manner, or if, upon reading the admired passages in such authors, he finds a coldness and indifference in his thoughts, he ought to conclude, not (as is too usual among tasteless readers) that the author wants those perfections which have been admired in him, but that he himself wants the faculty of discovering them.

He should, in the second place, be very careful to observe, whether he tastes the distinguishing perfections, or, if I may be allowed to call them so, the specific qualities of the author whom he peruses; whether he is particularly pleased with Livy for his manner of telling a story, with Sallust for his entering into those internal principles of action which arise from the characters and manners of the persons he describes, or with Tacitus for his displaying those outward motives of safety and interest which give birth to the whole series of transactions which he relates.

He may likewise consider, how differently he is affected by the same thought which presents itself in a great writer, from what he is when he finds it delivered by a person of an ordinary genius. For there is as much difference in apprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language and that of a common author, as in seeing an object by the light of a taper or by the light of the sun.

It is very difficult to lay down rules for the acquirement of such a taste as that I am here speaking of. The faculty must in some degree be born with us, and it very often happens, that those who have other qualities in perfection are wholly void of this. One of the most eminent mathematicians of the age has assured me, that the greatest pleasure he took in reading Virgil was in examining Aeneas his voyage by the map; as I question not but many a modern compiler of history would be delighted with little more in that divine author than the bare matters of fact.

But notwithstanding this faculty must in some measure be born with us, there are several methods for cultivating and improving it, and without which it will be very uncertain, and of little use to the person that possesses it. The most natural method for this purpose is to be conversant among the writings of the most polite authors. A man who has any relish for fine writing, either discovers new beauties, or receives stronger impressions from the masterly strokes of a great author every time he peruses him; besides that he naturally wears himself into the same manner of speaking and thinking.

Conversation with men of a polite genius is another method for improving our natural taste. It is impossible for a man of the greatest parts to consider anything in its whole extent and in all its variety of lights. Every man, besides those general observations which are to be made upon an author, forms several reflections that are peculiar to his own manner of thinking; so that conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections as well as our own. This is the best reason I can give for the observation which several have made, that men of great genius in the same way of writing seldom rise up singly, but at certain periods of time appear together and in a body; as they did at Rome in the reign of Augustus, and in Greece about the age of Socrates. I cannot think that Corneille, Racine, Moliere, Boileau, la Fontaine, Bruyere, Bossu, or the Daciers, would have written so

well as they have done, had they not been friends and contemporaries.

It is likewise necessary for a man who would form to himself a finished taste of good writing, to be well versed in the works of the best critics both ancient and modern. I must confess that I could wish there were authors of this kind, who, beside the mechanical rules which a man of very little taste may discourse upon, would enter into the very spirit and soul of fine writing, and show us the several sources of that pleasure which rises in the mind upon the perusal of a noble work. Thus although in poetry it be absolutely necessary that the unities of time, place, and action, with other points of the same nature, should be thoroughly explained and understood; there is still something more essential to the art, something that elevates and astonishes the fancy, and gives a greatness of mind to the reader, which few of the critics besides Longinus have considered.

Our general taste in England is for epigram, turns of wit, and forced conceits, which have no manner of influence either for the bettering or enlarging the mind of him who reads them, and have been carefully avoided by the greatest writers, both among the ancients and moderns. I have endeavoured in several of my speculations to banish this Gothic taste, which has taken possession among us. I entertained the town for a week together with an essay upon wit, in which I endeavoured to detect several of those false kinds which have been admired in the different ages of the

world; and at the same time to show wherein the nature of true wit consists. I afterwards gave an instance of the great force which lies in a natural simplicity of thought to affect the mind of the reader, from such vulgar pieces as have little else besides this single qualification to recommend them. I have likewise examined the works of the greatest poet which our nation or perhaps any other has produced, and particularized most of those rational and manly beauties which give a value to that divine work. I shall next Saturday enter upon an essay on *the pleasures of the imagination*, which, though it shall consider that subject at large, will perhaps suggest to the reader what it is that gives a beauty to many passages of the finest writers both in prose and verse. As an undertaking of this nature is entirely new, I question not but it will be received with candour.

The Spectator, No. 409. Thursday, June 19, 1712.

CXV

The Pleasures of Imagination

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fontes;
Atque haurire:— LUCR.

OUR sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our senses. It fills the mind with the largest variety of ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues the longest in action without

being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments. The sense of feeling can indeed give us a notion of extension, shape, and all other ideas that enter at the eye, except colours; but at the same time it is very much straitened and confined in its operations to the number, bulk, and distance of its particular objects. Our sight seems designed to supply all these defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of touch, that spreads itself over an infinite multitude of bodies, comprehends the largest figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote parts of the universe.

It is this sense which furnishes the imagination with its ideas; so that by the pleasures of the imagination or fancy (which I shall use promiscuously) I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we have them actually in our view, or when we call up their ideas into our minds by paintings, statues, descriptions, or any the like occasion. We cannot indeed have a single image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight; but we have the power of retaining, altering, and compounding those images, which we have once received, into all the varieties of picture and vision that are most agreeable to the imagination; for by this faculty a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compass of nature.

There are few words in the English language which are employed in a more loose and uncircumscribed

sense than those of the fancy and the imagination. I therefore thought it necessary to fix and determine the notion of these two words, as I intend to make use of them in the thread of my following speculations, that the reader may conceive rightly what is the subject which I proceed upon. I must therefore desire him to remember, that by the pleasures of the imagination I mean only such pleasures as arise originally from sight, and that I divide these pleasures into two kinds: my design being first of all to discourse of those primary pleasures of the imagination which entirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes; and in the next place to speak of those secondary pleasures of the imagination which flow from the ideas of visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable visions of things that are either absent or fictitious.

The pleasures of the imagination, taken in the full extent, are not so gross as those of sense, nor so refined as those of the understanding. The last are, indeed, more preferable, because they are founded on some new knowledge or improvement in the mind of man; yet it must be confessed, that those of the imagination are as great and as transporting as the other. A beautiful prospect delights the soul as much as a demonstration; and a description in Homer has charmed more readers than a chapter in Aristotle. Besides, the pleasures of the imagination have this advantage above those of the understanding, that

they are more obvious and more easy to be acquired. It is but opening the eye, and the scene enters. The colours paint themselves on the fancy, with very little attention of thought or application of mind in the beholder. We are struck, we know not how, with the symmetry of anything we see, and immediately assent to the beauty of an object, without inquiring into the particular causes and occasions of it.

A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures, that the vulgar are not capable of receiving. He can converse with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a statue. He meets with a secret refreshment in a description, and often feels a greater satisfaction in the prospect of fields and meadows, than another does in the possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind of property in everything he sees, and makes the most rude uncultivated parts of nature administer to his pleasures: so that he looks upon the world, as it were, in another light, and discovers in it a multitude of charms, that conceal themselves from the generality of mankind.

There are, indeed, but very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a relish of any pleasures that are not criminal; every diversion they take is at the expense of some one virtue or another, and their very first step out of business is into vice or folly. A man should endeavour, therefore, to make the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with safety, and find in them such a satisfaction as a wise man would not blush to take.

Of this nature are those of the imagination, which do not require such a bent of thought as is necessary to our more serious employments, nor, at the same time, suffer the mind to sink into that negligence and remissness which are apt to accompany our more sensual delights, but, like a gentle exercise to the faculties, awaken them from sloth and idleness, without putting them upon any labour or difficulty.

We might here add, that the pleasures of the fancy are more conducive to health than those of the understanding, which are worked out by dint of thinking, and attended with too violent a labour of the brain. Delightful scenes, whether in nature, painting, or poetry, have a kindly influence on the body as well as the mind, and not only serve to clear and brighten the imagination, but are able to disperse grief and melancholy, and to set the animal spirits in pleasing and agreeable motions. For this reason Sir Francis Bacon, in his *Essay upon Health*, has not thought it improper to prescribe to his reader a poem or a prospect, where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtle disquisitions, and advises him to pursue studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature.

I have in this paper, by way of introduction, settled the notion of those pleasures of the imagination which are the subject of my present undertaking, and endeavoured, by several considerations, to recommend to my reader the pursuit of those pleasures. I shall,

in my next paper, examine the several sources from whence these pleasures are derived.

The Spectator, No. 411. Saturday, June 21, 1712.

CXVI

The Pleasures of Sight

—Divisum sic breve fiet opus.—MART.

I SHALL first consider those pleasures of the imagination, which arise from the actual view and survey of outward objects; and these, I think, all proceed from the sight of what is great, uncommon, or beautiful. There may, indeed, be something so terrible or offensive, that the horror or loathsomeness of an object may overbear the pleasure which results from its greatness, novelty, or beauty; but still there will be such a mixture of delight in the very disgust it gives us, as any of these three qualifications are most conspicuous and prevailing.

By greatness, I do not only mean the bulk of any single object, but the largeness of a whole view, considered as one entire piece. Such are the prospects of an open champaign country, a vast uncultivated desert, of huge heaps of mountains, high rocks and precipices, or a wide expanse of waters, where we are not struck with the novelty or beauty of the sight, but with that rude kind of magnificence which appears in many of these stupendous works of nature. Our imagination loves to be filled with an object, or to

grasp at anything that is too big for its capacity. We are flung into a pleasing astonishment at such unbounded views, and feel a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul at the apprehension of them. The mind of man naturally hates everything that looks like a restraint upon it, and is apt to fancy itself under a sort of confinement, when the sight is pent up in a narrow compass, and shortened on every side by the neighbourhood of walls or mountains. On the contrary, a spacious horizon is an image of liberty, where the eye has room to range abroad, to expatiate at large on the immensity of its views, and to lose itself amidst the variety of objects that offer themselves to its observation. Such wide and undetermined prospects are as pleasing to the fancy, as the speculations of eternity or infinitude are to the understanding. But if there be a beauty or uncommonness joined with this grandeur, as in a troubled ocean, a heaven adorned with stars and meteors, or a spacious landscape cut out into rivers, woods, rocks, and meadows, the pleasure still grows upon us, as it arises from more than a single principle.

Everything that is new or uncommon raises a pleasure in the imagination, because it fills the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifies its curiosity, and gives it an idea of which it was not before possessed. We are indeed so often conversant with one set of objects, and tired out with so many repeated shows of the same things, that whatever is new or uncommon contributes a little to vary human life, and to divert

our minds for a while with the strangeness of its appearance: it serves us for a kind of refreshment, and takes off from that satiety we are apt to complain of in our usual and ordinary entertainments. It is this that bestows charms on a monster, and makes even the imperfections of nature please us. It is this that recommends variety, where the mind is every instant called off to something new, and the attention not suffered to dwell too long and waste itself on any particular object. It is this, likewise, that improves what is great or beautiful, and makes it afford the mind a double entertainment. Groves, fields, and meadows are at any season of the year pleasant to look upon, but never so much as in the opening of the spring, when they are all new and fresh, with their first gloss upon them, and not yet too much accustomed and familiar to the eye. For this reason there is nothing that more enlivens a prospect than rivers, jetteaus, or falls of water, where the scene is perpetually shifting and entertaining the sight every moment with something that is new. We are quickly tired with looking upon hills and valleys, where everything continues fixed and settled in the same place and posture, but find our thoughts a little agitated and relieved at the sight of such objects as are ever in motion and sliding away from beneath the eye of the beholder.

But there is nothing that makes its way more directly to the soul than beauty, which immediately diffuses a secret satisfaction and complacency through the imagination, and gives a finishing to anything that

is great or uncommon. The very first discovery of it strikes the mind with an inward joy, and spreads a cheerfulness and delight through all its faculties. There is not perhaps any real beauty or deformity more in one piece of matter than another, because we might have been so made, that whatsoever now appears loathsome to us, might have shown itself agreeable; but we find by experience, that there are several modifications of matter which the mind, without any previous consideration, pronounces at first sight beautiful or deformed. Thus we see that every different species of sensible creatures has its different notions of beauty, and that each of them is most affected with the beauties of its own kind. This is nowhere more remarkable than in birds of the same shape and proportion, where we often see the male determined in his courtship by the single grain or tincture of a feather, and never discovering any charms but in the colour of its species.

Scit thalamo servare fidem, sanctasque veretur
Connubii leges: non illum in pectore candor
Sollicitat niveus, neque pravum accendit amorem
Splendida lanugo, vel honesta in vertice crista,
Purpureusve vitor pennarum: sed agmina late
Feminea explorat cautus, maculasque requirit
Cognatas, paribusque interlita corpora guttis:
Ni faceret, pictis sylvam circum undique monstris
Confusam aspiceres vulgo, partusque biformes,
Et genus amiguum, et Veneris monumenta nefandae.
Hinc mendax in nigro se oblectat nigra marito,
Hinc sevum lascivus petit Philomela cavernis,
Agnositque pares sonitus, hinc noctua tetram
Canitiem alarum, et glaucos miratur ocellos.
Nempe sibi semper constat, crescitque quotannis
Lucida progenies, castos confessa parentes;

Dum virides inter saltus lucosque sonoros
Vere novo exultat, plumasque decora juventus
Explicat ad solem, patriisque coloribus ardet.[1]

There is a second kind of beauty that we find in the several products of art and nature, which does not work in the imagination with that warmth and violence as the beauty that appears in our proper species, but is apt however to raise in us a secret delight, and a kind of fondness for the places or objects in which we discover it. This consists either in the gaiety or variety of colours, in the symmetry and proportion of parts, in the arrangement and disposition of bodies, or in a just mixture and concurrence of all together. Among these several kinds of beauty the eye takes most delight in colours. We nowhere meet with a more glorious or pleasing show in nature, than what appears in the heavens at the rising and setting of the sun, which is wholly made up of those different stains of light that show themselves in clouds of a different situation. For this reason we find the poets, who are always addressing themselves to the imagination, borrowing more of their epithets from colours than from any other topic.

As the fancy delights in everything that is great, strange, or beautiful, and is still more pleased the more it finds of these perfections in the same object, so is it capable of receiving a new satisfaction by the assistance of another sense. Thus any continued sound, as the music of birds, or a fall of water, awakens every moment

[1] These elegant lines are by Addison himself.

the mind of the beholder, and makes him more attentive to the several beauties of the place that lie before him. Thus if there arises a fragrancy of smells or perfumes, they heighten the pleasures of the imagination, and make even the colours and verdure of the landscape appear more agreeable; for the ideas of both senses recommend each other, and are pleasanter together than when they enter the mind separately: as the different colours of a picture, when they are well disposed, set off one another, and receive an additional beauty from the advantage of their situation.

The Spectator, No. 412. Monday, June 23, 1712.

CXVII

The Beauty of the Natural World

—*Causa latet, vis est notissima*—Ovid.

Though in yesterday's paper we considered how everything that is great, new, or beautiful, is apt to affect the imagination with pleasure, we must own that it is impossible for us to assign the necessary cause of this pleasure, because we know neither the nature of an idea nor the substance of a human soul, which might help us to discover the conformity or disagreeableness of the one to the other; and therefore, for want of such a light, all that we can do in speculations of this kind is to reflect on those operations of the soul that are most agreeable, and to range under their proper heads what is pleasing or displeasing to the

mind, without being able to trace out the several necessary and efficient causes from whence the pleasure or displeasure arises.

Final causes lie more bare and open to our observation, as there are often a greater variety that belong to the same effect; and these, though they are not altogether so satisfactory, are generally more useful than the other, as they give us greater occasion of admiring the goodness and wisdom of the first contriver.

One of the final causes of our delight in anything that is great, may be this. The Supreme Author of our being has so formed the soul of man, that nothing but himself can be its last, adequate, and proper happiness. Because, therefore, a great part of our happiness must arise from the contemplation of his being, that he might give our souls a just relish of such a contemplation, he has made them naturally delight in the apprehension of what is great or unlimited. Our admiration, which is a very pleasing motion of the mind, immediately rises at the consideration of any object that takes up a great deal of room in the fancy, and by consequence will improve into the highest pitch of astonishment and devotion when we contemplate his nature, that is neither circumscribed by time nor place, nor to be comprehended by the largest capacity of a created being.

He has annexed a secret pleasure to the idea of anything that is new or uncommon, that he might encourage us in the pursuit after knowledge, and engage us to search into the wonders of his creation; for every

new idea brings such a pleasure along with it, as rewards any pains we have taken in its acquisition, and consequently serves as a motive to put us upon fresh discoveries.

He has made everything that is beautiful in our own species pleasant, that all creatures might be tempted to multiply their kind and fill the world with inhabitants; for 'tis very remarkable that wherever nature is crossed in the production of a monster (the result of any unnatural mixture) the breed is incapable of propagating its likeness and of founding a new order of creatures; so that unless all animals were allured by the beauty of their own species, generation would be at an end, and the earth unpeopled.

In the last place, he has made everything that is beautiful in all other objects pleasant, or rather has made so many objects appear beautiful, that he might render the whole creation more gay and delightful. He has given almost everything about us the power of raising an agreeable idea in the imagination: so that it is impossible for us to behold his works with coldness or indifference, and to survey so many beauties without a secret satisfaction and complacency. Things would make but a poor appearance to the eye, if we saw them only in their proper figures and motions: and what reason can we assign for their exciting in us many of those ideas which are different from anything that exists in the objects themselves (for such are light and colours), were not it to add supernumerary ornaments to the universe, and make it more agreeable to the

imagination? We are everywhere entertained with pleasing shows and apparitions, we discover imaginary glories in the heavens and in the earth, and see some of this visionary beauty poured out upon the whole creation; but what a rough unsightly sketch of nature should we be entertained with, did all her colouring disappear, and the several distinctions of light and shade vanish? In short, our souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing delusion, and we walk about like the enchanted hero of a romance, who sees beautiful castles, woods, and meadows, and at the same time hears the warbling of birds and the purling of streams; but upon the finishing of some secret spell the fantastic scene breaks up, and the disconsolate knight finds himself on a barren heath or in a solitary desert. It is not improbable that something like this may be the state of the soul after its first separation, in respect of the images it will receive from matter; though indeed the ideas of colours are so pleasing and beautiful in the imagination, that it is possible the soul will not be deprived of them, but perhaps find them excited by some other occasional cause, as they are at present by the different impressions of the subtle matter on the organ of sight.

I have here supposed that my reader is acquainted with that great modern discovery, which is at present universally acknowledged by all the inquirers into natural philosophy: namely, that light and colours, as apprehended by the imagination, are only ideas in the mind, and not qualities that have any existence in

matter. As this is a truth which has been proved incontestably by many modern philosophers, and is indeed one of the finest speculations in that science, if the English reader would see the notion explained at large, he may find it in the eighth chapter of the second book of Mr. Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*.

The Spectator, No. 413. Tuesday, June 24, 1712.

CXVIII

Nature and Art

—Alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res et conjurat amice.—HOR.

IF we consider the works of nature and art, as they are qualified to entertain the imagination, we shall find the last very defective in comparison of the former; for though they may sometimes appear as beautiful or strange, they can have nothing in them of that vastness and immensity, which afford so great an entertainment to the mind of the beholder. The one may be as polite and delicate as the other, but can never show herself so august and magnificent in the design. There is something more bold and masterly in the rough careless strokes of nature than in the nice touches and embellishments of art. The beauties of the most stately garden or palace lie in a narrow compass, the imagination immediately runs them over, and requires something else to gratify her; but in the wide fields of nature the sight wanders up and down without

confinement, and is fed with an infinite variety of images without any certain stint or number. For this reason we always find the poet in love with a country life, where nature appears in the greatest perfection, and furnishes out all those scenes that are most apt to delight the imagination.

Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus, et fugit urbes.—HOR.

Hic secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum ; hic latis otia fundis,
Speluncae, vivique lacus, hic frigida Tempe,
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni.—VIRG.

But though there are several of these wild scenes that are more delightful than any artificial shows, yet we find the works of nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of art ; for in this case our pleasure rises from a double principle, from the agreeableness of the objects to the eye, and from their similitude to other objects : we are pleased as well with comparing their beauties as with surveying them, and can represent them to our minds either as copies or originals. Hence it is that we take delight in a prospect which is well laid out, and diversified with fields and meadows, woods and rivers ; in those accidental landscapes of trees, clouds, and cities that are sometimes found in the veins of marble ; in the curious fretwork of rocks and grottoes ; and, in a word, in anything that hath such a variety or regularity as may seem the effect of design in what we call the works of chance.

If the products of nature rise in value according as

they more or less resemble those of art, we may be sure that artificial works receive a greater advantage from their resemblance of such as are natural; because here the similitude is not only pleasant, but the pattern more perfect. The prettiest landscape I ever saw, was one drawn on the walls of a dark room, which stood opposite on one side to a navigable river, and on the other to a park. The experiment is very common in optics. Here you might discover the waves and fluctuations of the water in strong and proper colours, with the picture of a ship entering at one end and sailing by degrees through the whole piece. On another there appeared the green shadows of trees, waving to and fro with the wind, and herds of deer among them in miniature, leaping about upon the wall. I must confess, the novelty of such a sight may be one occasion of its pleasantness to the imagination, but certainly the chief reason is its near resemblance to nature, as it does not only, like other pictures, give the colour and figure, but the motion of the things it represents.

We have before observed, that there is generally in nature something more grand and august than what we meet with in the curiosities of art. When, therefore, we see this imitated in any measure, it gives us a nobler and more exalted kind of pleasure than what we receive from the nicer and more accurate productions of art. On this account our English gardens are not so entertaining to the fancy as those in France and Italy, where we see a large extent of ground covered

over with an agreeable mixture of garden and forest, which represent everywhere an artificial rudeness much more charming than that neatness and elegancy which we meet with in those of our own country. It might, indeed, be of ill consequence to the public, as well as unprofitable to private persons, to alienate so much ground from pasturage and the plough in many parts of a country that is so well peopled, and cultivated to a far greater advantage. But why may not a whole estate be thrown into a kind of garden by frequent plantations, that may turn as much to the profit as the pleasure of the owner? A marsh overgrown with willows, or a mountain shaded with oaks, are not only more beautiful, but more beneficial, than when they lie bare and unadorned. Fields of corn make a pleasant prospect, and if the walks were a little taken care of that lie between them, if the natural embroidery of the meadows were helped and improved by some small additions of art, and the several rows of hedges set off by trees and flowers that the soil was capable of receiving, a man might make a pretty landscape of his own possessions.

Writers who have given us an account of China, tell us the inhabitants of that country laugh at the plantations of our Europeans, which are laid out by the rule and line; because, they say, any one may place trees in equal rows and uniform figures. They choose rather to show a genius in works of this nature, and therefore always conceal the art by which they direct themselves. They have a word, it seems, in their

language, by which they express the particular beauty of a plantation that thus strikes the imagination at first sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an effect. Our British gardeners, on the contrary, instead of humouring nature, love to deviate from it as much as possible. Our trees rise in cones, globes, and pyramids. We see the marks of the scissors upon every plant and bush. I do not know whether I am singular in my opinion, but, for my own part, I would rather look upon a tree in all its luxuriancy and diffusion of boughs and branches, than when it is thus cut and trimmed into a mathematical figure; and cannot but fancy that an orchard in flower looks infinitely more delightful than all the little labyrinths of the most finished parterre. But as our great modellers of gardens have their magazines of plants to dispose of, it is very natural for them to tear up all the beautiful plantations of fruit trees, and contrive a plan that may most turn to their own profit, in taking off their evergreens and the like moveable plants, with which their shops are plentifully stocked.

The Spectator, No. 414. Wednesday, June 25, 1712.

CXIX

The Pleasure of Ideal Descriptions

ferat — et rubus asper amomum.—VIRG.

THE pleasures of these secondary views of the imagination are of a wider and more universal nature than

those it has when joined with sight; for not only what is great, strange, or beautiful, but anything that is disagreeable when looked upon, pleases us in an apt description. Here, therefore, we must inquire after a new principle of pleasure, which is nothing else but the action of the mind, which *compares* the ideas that arise from words with the ideas that arise from the objects themselves; and why this operation of the mind is attended with so much pleasure, we have before considered. For this reason, therefore, the description of a dunghill is pleasing to the imagination, if the image be represented to our minds by suitable expressions; though perhaps this may be more properly called the pleasure of the understanding than of the fancy, because we are not so much delighted with the image that is contained in the description, as with the aptness of the description to excite the image.

But if the description of what is little, common, or deformed, be acceptable to the imagination, the description of what is great, surprising, or beautiful, is much more so; because here we are not only delighted with *comparing* the representation with the original, but are highly pleased with the original itself. Most readers, I believe, are more charmed with Milton's description of paradise than of hell; they are both, perhaps, equally perfect in their kind, but in the one the brimstone and sulphur are not so refreshing to the imagination, as the beds of flowers and the wilderness of sweets in the other.

There is yet another circumstance which recom-

mends a description more than all the rest, and that is, if it represents to us such objects as are apt to raise a secret ferment in the mind of the reader, and to work with violence upon his passions. For in this case we are at once warmed and enlightened, so that the pleasure becomes more universal, and is several ways qualified to entertain us. Thus in painting, it is pleasant to look on the picture of any face where the resemblance is hit, but the pleasure increases if it be the picture of a face that is beautiful, and is still greater if the beauty be softened with an air of melancholy or sorrow. The two leading passions which the more serious parts of poetry endeavour to stir up in us, are terror and pity. And here, by the way, one would wonder how it comes to pass, that such passions as are very unpleasant at all other times, are very agreeable when excited by proper descriptions. It is not strange that we should take delight in such passages as are apt to produce hope, joy, admiration, love, or the like emotions in us, because they never rise in the mind without an inward pleasure which attends them. But how comes it to pass, that we should take delight in being terrified or dejected by a description, when we find so much uneasiness in the fear or grief which we receive from any other occasion?

If we consider, therefore, the nature of this pleasure, we shall find that it does not arise so properly from the description of what is terrible, as from the reflection we make on ourselves at the time of reading it. When we look on such hideous objects, we are not a little

pleased to think we are in no danger of them. We consider them at the same time as dreadful and harmless; so that the more frightful appearance they make, the greater is the pleasure we receive from the sense of our own safety. In short, we look upon the terrors of a description with the same curiosity and satisfaction that we survey a dead monster.

—*Informe cadaver*
Protrahitur, nequeunt expleri corda tuendo
Terribiles oculos, vultum, villosaque setis
Pectora semiferi, atque extinctos faucibus ignes.—VIRG.

It is for the same reason that we are delighted with the reflecting upon dangers that are past, or in looking on a precipice at a distance, which would fill us with a different kind of horror, if we saw it hanging over our heads.

In the like manner, when we read of torments, wounds, deaths, and the like dismal accidents, our pleasure does not flow so properly from the grief which such melancholy descriptions give us, as from the secret comparison which we make between ourselves and the person who suffers. Such representations teach us to set a just value upon our own condition, and make us prize our good fortune, which exempts us from the like calamities. This is, however, such a kind of pleasure as we are not capable of receiving, when we see a person actually lying under the tortures that we meet with in a description; because in this case the object presses too close upon our senses, and bears so hard upon us, that it does not give us time or leisure

to reflect on ourselves. Our thoughts are so intent upon the miseries of the sufferer, that we cannot turn them upon our own happiness. Whereas, on the contrary, we consider the misfortunes we read in history or poetry either as past or as fictitious, so that the reflection upon ourselves rises in us insensibly, and overbears the sorrow we conceive for the sufferings of the afflicted.

But because the mind of man requires something more perfect in matter than what it finds there, and can never meet with any sight in nature which sufficiently answers its highest ideas of pleasantness ; or, in other words, because the imagination can fancy to itself things more great, strange, or beautiful than the eye ever saw, and is still sensible of some defect in what it has seen ; on this account it is the part of a poet to humour the imagination in its own notions, by mending and perfecting nature where he describes a reality, and by adding greater beauties than are put together in nature, where he describes a fiction.

He is not obliged to attend her in the slow advances which she makes from one season to another, or to observe her conduct in the successive production of plants and flowers. He may draw into his description all the beauties of the spring and autumn, and make the whole year contribute something to render it the more agreeable. His rose-trees, woodbines, and jessamines may flower together, and his beds be covered at the same time with lilies, violets, and amaranths. His soil is not restrained to any particular

set of plants, but is proper either for oaks or myrtles, and adapts itself to the products of every climate. Oranges may grow wild in it; myrrh may be met with in every hedge; and if he thinks it proper to have a grove of spices, he can quickly command sun enough to raise it. If all this will not furnish out an agreeable scene, he can make several new species of flowers, with richer scents and higher colours than any that grow in the gardens of nature. His concerts of birds may be as full and harmonious, and his woods as thick and gloomy as he pleases. He is at no more expense in a long vista than a short one, and can as easily throw his cascades from a precipice of half a mile high, as from one of twenty yards. He has his choice of the winds, and can turn the course of his rivers in all the variety of meanders that are most delightful to the reader's imagination. In a word, he has the modelling of nature in his own hands, and may give her what charms he pleases, provided he does not reform her too much, and run into absurdities by endeavouring to excel.

The Spectator, No. 418. Monday, June 30, 1712.

CXX

Divine Philosophy

—*Quocunque volunt mentem auditoris agunto.*—Hor.

As the writers in poetry and fiction borrow their several materials from outward objects, and join them together at their own pleasure, there are others who

are obliged to follow nature more closely and to take entire scenes out of her. Such are historians, natural philosophers, travellers, geographers, and, in a word, all who describe visible objects of a real existence.

It is the most agreeable talent of an historian to be able to draw up his armies and fight his battles in proper expressions, to set before our eyes the divisions, cabals, and jealousies of great men, and to lead us step by step into the several actions and events of his history. We love to see the subject unfolding itself by just degrees, and breaking upon us insensibly, that so we may be kept in a pleasing suspense, and have time given us to raise our expectations, and to side with one of the parties concerned in the relation. I confess this shows more the art than the veracity of the historian, but I am only to speak of him as he is qualified to please the imagination. And in this respect Livy has, perhaps, excelled all who ever went before him, or have written since his time. He describes everything in so lively a manner, that his whole history is an admirable picture, and touches on such proper circumstances in every story, that his reader becomes a kind of spectator, and feels in himself all the variety of passions which are correspondent to the several parts of the relation.

But among this set of writers, there are none who more gratify and enlarge the imagination than the authors of the new philosophy, whether we consider their theories of the earth or heavens, the discoveries they have made by glasses, or any other of their contemplations on nature. We are not a little pleased

to find every green leaf swarm with millions of animals, that at their largest growth are not visible to the naked eye. There is something very engaging to the fancy, as well as to our reason, in the treatises of metals, minerals, plants, and meteors. But when we survey the whole earth at once, and the several planets that lie within its neighbourhood, we are filled with a pleasing astonishment, to see so many worlds hanging one above another, and sliding round their axles in such an amazing pomp and solemnity. If, after this, we contemplate those wide fields of ether, that reach in height as far as from Saturn to the fixed stars, and run abroad almost to an infinitude, our imagination finds its capacity filled with so immense a prospect, and puts it upon the stretch to comprehend it. But if we yet rise higher, and consider the fixed stars as so many vast oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets, and still discover new firmaments and new lights that are sunk farther in those unfathomable depths of ether, so as not to be seen by the strongest of our telescopes, we are lost in such a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the immensity and magnificence of nature.

Nothing is more pleasant to the fancy than to enlarge itself by degrees in its contemplation of the various proportions which its several objects bear to each other, when it compares the body of man to the bulk of the whole earth, the earth to the circle it describes round the sun, that circle to the sphere of the

fixed stars, the sphere of the fixed stars to the circuit of the whole creation, the whole creation itself to the infinite space that is everywhere diffused about it; or when the imagination works downward, and considers the bulk of a human body in respect of an animal a hundred times less than a mite, the particular limbs of such an animal, the different springs which actuate the limbs, the spirits which set these springs a-going, and the proportionable minuteness of these several parts, before they have arrived at their full growth and perfection. But if, after all this, we take the least particle of these animal spirits, and consider its capacity of being wrought into a world that shall contain within those narrow dimensions a heaven and earth, stars and planets, and every different species of living creatures, in the same analogy and proportion they bear to each other in our own universe; such a speculation, by reason of its nicety, appears ridiculous to those who have not turned their thoughts that way, though at the same time it is founded on no less than the evidence of a demonstration. Nay, we might yet carry it farther, and discover in the smallest particle of this little world a new inexhausted fund of matter, capable of being spun out into another universe.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because I think it may show us the proper limits, as well as the defectiveness, of our imagination; how it is confined to a very small quantity of space, and immediately stopt in its operations, when it endeavours to take in anything that is very great or very little. Let a man

try to conceive the different bulk of an animal which is twenty, from another which is a hundred times less than a mite, or to compare in his thoughts a length of a thousand diameters of the earth with that of a million, and he will quickly find that he has no different measures in his mind, adjusted to such extraordinary degrees of grandeur or minuteness. The understanding, indeed, opens an infinite space on every side of us, but the imagination, after a few faint efforts, is immediately at a stand, and finds herself swallowed up in the immensity of the void that surrounds it: our reason can pursue a particle of matter through an infinite variety of divisions, but the fancy soon loses sight of it, and feels in itself a kind of chasm, that wants to be filled with matter of a more sensible bulk. We can neither widen nor contract the faculty to the dimensions of either extreme: the object is too big for our capacity when we would comprehend the circumference of a world, and dwindles into nothing when we endeavour after the idea of an atom.

It is possible this defect of imagination may not be in the soul itself, but as it acts in conjunction with the body. Perhaps there may not be room in the brain for such a variety of impressions, or the animal spirits may be incapable of figuring them in such a manner, as is necessary to excite so very large or very minute ideas. However it be, we may well suppose that beings of a higher nature very much excel us in this respect, as it is probable the soul of man will be infinitely more

perfect hereafter in this faculty as well as in all the rest; insomuch that, perhaps, the imagination will be able to keep pace with the understanding, and to form in itself distinct ideas of all the different modes and quantities of space.

The Spectator, No. 420. Wednesday, July 2, 1712.

CXXI

Noble Imagery

Ignotis errare locis, ignota videre
Flumina gaudebat, studio minuente laborem.—OVID.

THE pleasures of the imagination are not wholly confined to such particular authors as are conversant in material objects, but are often to be met with among the polite masters of morality, criticism, and other speculations abstracted from matter, who, though they do not directly treat of the visible parts of nature, often draw from them their similitudes, metaphors, and allegories. By these allusions a truth in the understanding is as it were reflected by the imagination; we are able to see something like colour and shape in a notion, and to discover a scheme of thoughts traced out upon matter. And here the mind receives a great deal of satisfaction, and has two of its faculties gratified at the same time, while the fancy is busy in copying after the understanding, and transcribing ideas out of the intellectual world into the material.

The great art of a writer shows itself in the choice of pleasing allusions, which are generally to be taken from the great or beautiful works of art or nature; for though whatever is new or uncommon is apt to delight the imagination, the chief design of an allusion being to illustrate and explain the passages of an author, it should be always borrowed from what is more known and common, than the passages which are to be explained.

Allegories, when well chosen, are like so many tracks of light in a discourse, that make everything about them clear and beautiful. A noble metaphor, when it is placed to an advantage, casts a kind of glory round it, and darts a lustre through a whole sentence: these different kinds of allusion are but so many different manners of similitude, and, that they may please the imagination, the likeness ought to be very exact or very agreeable, as we love to see a picture where the resemblance is just, or the posture and air graceful. But we often find eminent writers very faulty in this respect; great scholars are apt to fetch their comparisons and allusions from the sciences in which they are most conversant, so that a man may see the compass of their learning in a treatise on the most indifferent subject. I have read a discourse upon love, which none but a profound chymist could understand, and have heard many a sermon that should only have been preached before a congregation of Cartesians. On the contrary, your men of business usually have recourse to such instances as are too mean

and familiar. They are for drawing the reader into a game of chess or tennis, or for leading him from shop to shop in the cant of particular trades and employments. It is certain, there may be found an infinite variety of very agreeable allusions in both these kinds, but for the generality the most entertaining ones lie in the works of nature, which are obvious to all capacities, and more delightful than what is to be found in arts and sciences.

It is this talent of affecting the imagination that gives an embellishment to good sense, and makes one man's compositions more agreeable than another's. It sets off all writings in general, but is the very life and highest perfection of poetry: where it shines in an eminent degree, it has preserved several poems for many ages, that have nothing else to recommend them; and where all the other beauties are present, the work appears dry and insipid, if this single one be wanting. It has something in it like creation; it bestows a kind of existence, and draws up to the reader's view several objects which are not to be found in being. It makes additions to nature, and gives a greater variety to God's works. In a word, it is able to beautify and adorn the most illustrious scenes in the universe, or to fill the mind with more glorious shows and apparitions than can be found in any part of it.

We have now discovered the several originals of those pleasures that gratify the fancy; and here, perhaps, it would not be very difficult to cast under their proper heads those contrary objects, which are

apt to fill it with distaste and terror; for the imagination is as liable to pain as pleasure. When the brain is hurt by any accident, or the mind disordered by dreams or sickness, the fancy is overrun with wild dismal ideas, and terrified with a thousand hideous monsters of its own framing.

Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus,
Et solem geminum, et duplices se ostendere Thebas.
Aut Agamemnonius scenis agitatus Orestes,
Armatam facibus matrem et serpentibus atris
Cum videt, ultricesque sedent in limine Diræ.—VIRG.

There is not a sight in nature so mortifying as that of a distracted person, when his imagination is troubled, and his whole soul disordered and confused. Babylon in ruins is not so melancholy a spectacle. But to quit so disagreeable a subject, I shall only consider, by way of conclusion, what an infinite advantage this faculty gives an Almighty Being over the soul of man, and how great a measure of happiness or misery we are capable of receiving from the imagination only.

We have already seen the influence that one man has over the fancy of another, and with what ease he conveys into it a variety of imagery; how great a power then may we suppose lodged in Him, who knows all the ways of affecting the imagination, who can infuse what ideas he pleases, and fill those ideas with terror or delight to what degree he thinks fit? He can excite images in the mind without the help of words, and make scenes rise up before us and seem present to the eye without the assistance of bodies or exterior

objects. He can transport the imagination with such beautiful and glorious visions as cannot possibly enter into our present conceptions, or haunt it with such ghastly spectres and apparitions as would make us hope for annihilation, and think existence no better than a curse. In short, he can so exquisitely ravish or torture the soul through this single faculty, as might suffice to make the whole heaven or hell of any finite being.

The Spectator, No. 421. Thursday, July 3, 1712.

CXXII

The Tax on Paper

Tanti non es, ais. Sapis, Luperce.—MART.

THIS is the day on which many eminent authors will probably publish their last words. I am afraid that few of our weekly historians, who are men that above all others delight in war, will be able to subsist under the weight of a stamp and an approaching peace. A sheet of blank paper that must have this new imprimatur clapt upon it, before it is qualified to communicate anything to the public, will make its way in the world but very heavily. In short, the necessity of carrying a stamp, and the improbability of notifying a bloody battle, will, I am afraid, both concur to the sinking of those thin folios, which have every other day retailed to us the history of Europe for several years last past. A facetious friend of mine,

who loves a pun, calls this present mortality among authors, " the fall of the leaf."

I remember, upon Mr. Baxter's death, there was published a sheet of very good sayings, inscribed, *The Last Words of Mr. Baxter.* The title sold so great a number of these papers, that about a week after there came out a second sheet, inscribed, *More Last Words of Mr. Baxter.* In the same manner I have reason to think, that several ingenious writers, who have taken their leave of the public in farewell papers, will not give over so, but intend to appear again, though perhaps under another form, and with a different title. Be that as it will, it is my business in this place to give an account of my own intentions, and to acquaint my reader with the motives by which I act in this great crisis of the republic of letters.

I have been long debating in my own heart, whether I should throw up my pen, as an author that is cashiered by the act of parliament which is to operate within these four-and-twenty hours, or whether I should still persist in laying my speculations from day to day before the public. The argument which prevails with me most on the first side of the question is, that I am informed by my bookseller he must raise the price of every single paper to twopence, or that he shall not be able to pay the duty of it. Now as I am very desirous my readers should have their learning as cheap as possible, it is with great difficulty that I comply with him in this particular.

However, upon laying my reasons together in the

balance, I find that those which plead for the continuance of this work have much the greater weight. For, in the first place, in recompense for the expense to which this will put my readers, it is to be hoped they may receive from every paper so much instruction as will be a very good equivalent. And, in order to this, I would not advise any one to take it in, who, after the perusal of it, does not find himself twopence the wiser or the better man for it; or who, upon examination, does not believe that he has had twopennyworth of mirth or instruction for his money.

But I must confess there is another motive which prevails with me more than the former. I consider that the tax on paper was given for the support of the government; and as I have enemies, who are apt to pervert everything I do or say, I fear they would ascribe the laying down my paper, on such an occasion, to a spirit of malcontentedness, which I am resolved none shall ever justly upbraid me with. No, I shall glory in contributing my utmost to the weal public; and if my country receives five or six pounds a day by my labours, I shall be very well pleased to find myself so useful a member. It is a received maxim, that no honest man should enrich himself by methods that are prejudicial to the community in which he lives; and by the same rule I think we may pronounce the person to deserve very well of his countrymen, whose labours bring more into the public coffers than into his own pocket.

Since I have mentioned the word enemies, I must

explain myself so far as to acquaint my reader, that I mean only the insignificant party zealots on both sides; men of such poor narrow souls, that they are not capable of thinking on anything but with an eye to Whig or Tory. During the course of this paper, I have been accused by these despicable wretches of trimming, time-serving, personal reflection, secret satire, and the like. Now, though in these my compositions it is visible to any reader of common sense that I consider nothing but my subject, which is always of an indifferent nature; how is it possible for me to write so clear of party, as not to lie open to the censures of those who will be applying every sentence, and finding out persons and things in it which it has no regard to?

Several paltry scribblers and declaimers have done me the honour to be dull upon me in reflections of this nature; but notwithstanding my name has been sometimes traduced by this contemptible tribe of men, I have hitherto avoided all animadversions upon them. The truth of it is, I am afraid of making them appear considerable by taking notice of them, for they are like those imperceptible insects which are discovered by the microscope, and cannot be made the subject of observation without being magnified.

Having mentioned those few who have shown themselves the enemies of this paper, I should be very ungrateful to the public, did not I at the same time testify my gratitude to those who are its friends, in which number I may reckon many of the most distinguished persons of all conditions, parties, and pro-

fessions in the isle of Great Britain. I am not so vain as to think this approbation is so much due to the performance as to the design. There is, and ever will be, justice enough in the world to afford patronage and protection for those who endeavour to advance truth and virtue, without regard to the passions and prejudices of any particular cause or faction. If I have any other merit in me, it is that I have new-pointed all the batteries of ridicule. They have been generally planted against persons who have appeared serious rather than absurd; or at best have aimed rather at what is unfashionable than what is vicious. For my own part, I have endeavoured to make nothing ridiculous that is not in some measure criminal. I have set up the immoral man as the object of derision: in short, if I have not formed a new weapon against vice and irreligion, I have at least shown how that weapon may be put to a right use, which has so often fought the battles of impiety and profaneness.

The Spectator, No. 445. Thursday, July 31, 1712.

CXXIII

The Newsmonger

Est natura hominum novitatis avida.
PLIN. apud LILLIUM.

THERE is no humour in my countrymen which I am more inclined to wonder at, than their general thirst after news. There are about half a dozen ingenious

men, who live very plentifully upon this curiosity of their fellow-subjects. They all of them receive the same advices from abroad, and very often in the same words; but their way of cooking it is so different, that there is no citizen, who has an eye to the public good, that can leave the coffee-house with peace of mind, before he has given every one of them a reading. These several dishes of news are so very agreeable to the palate of my countrymen, that they are not only pleased with them when they are served up hot, but when they are again set cold before them by those penetrating politicians, who oblige the public with their reflections and observations upon every piece of intelligence that is sent us from abroad. The text is given us by one set of writers, and the comment by another.

But notwithstanding we have the same tale told us in so many different papers, and if occasion requires in so many articles of the same paper; notwithstanding in a scarcity of foreign posts we hear the same story repeated by different advices from Paris, Brussels, the Hague, and from every great town in Europe; notwithstanding the multitude of annotations, explanations, reflections, and various readings which it passes through, our time lies heavy on our hands till the arrival of a fresh mail: we long to receive further particulars, to hear what will be the next step, or what will be the consequences of that which has been lately taken. A westerly wind keeps the whole town in suspense, and puts a stop to conversation.

This general curiosity has been raised and inflamed by our late wars, and, if rightly directed, might be of good use to a person who has such a thirst awakened in him. Why should not a man, who takes delight in reading everything that is new, apply himself to history, travels, and other writings of the same kind, where he will find perpetual fuel for his curiosity, and meet with much more pleasure and improvement than in these papers of the week? An honest tradesman, who languishes a whole summer in expectation of a battle, and perhaps is balked at last, may here meet with half a dozen in a day. He may read the news of a whole campaign in less time than he now bestows upon the products of any single post. Fights, conquests, and revolutions lie thick together. The reader's curiosity is raised and satisfied every moment, and his passions disappointed or gratified, without being detained in a state of uncertainty from day to day, or lying at the mercy of sea and wind. In short, the mind is not here kept in a perpetual gape after knowledge, nor punished with that eternal thirst, which is the portion of all our modern newsmongers and coffee-house politicians.

All matters of fact, which a man did not know before, are news to him; and I do not see how any haberdasher in Cheapside is more concerned in the present quarrel of the Cantons, than he was in that of the League. At least, I believe every one will allow me, it is of more importance to an Englishman to know the history of his ancestors, than that of his contemporaries

who live upon the banks of the Danube or the Borysthenes. As for those who are of another mind, I shall recommend to them the following letter from a projector, who is willing to turn a penny by this remarkable curiosity of his countrymen.

"MR. SPECTATOR—You must have observed, that men who frequent coffee-houses and delight in news, are pleased with everything that is matter of fact, so it be what they have not heard before. A victory or a defeat are equally agreeable to them. The shutting of a cardinal's mouth pleases them one post, and the opening of it another. They are glad to hear the French court is removed to Marli, and are afterwards as much delighted with its return to Versailles. They read the advertisements with the same curiosity as the articles of public news; and are as pleased to hear of a piebald horse that is strayed out of a field near Islington, as of a whole troop that has been engaged in any foreign adventure. In short, they have a relish for everything that is news, let the matter of it be what it will; or to speak more properly, they are men of a voracious appetite, but no taste. Now, sir, since the great fountain of news, I mean the war, is very near being dried up; and since these gentlemen have contracted such an inextinguishable thirst after it, I have taken their case and my own into consideration, and have thought of a project which may turn to the advantage of us both. I have thoughts of publishing a daily paper, which shall comprehend in it all the most remarkable occur-

rences in every little town, village, and hamlet that lie within ten miles of London, or in other words, within the verge of the penny-post. I have pitched upon this scene of intelligence for two reasons; first, because the carriage of letters will be very cheap; and secondly, because I may receive them every day. By this means my readers will have their news fresh and fresh, and many worthy citizens who cannot sleep with any satisfaction at present, for want of being informed how the world goes, may go to bed contentedly, it being my design to put out my paper every night at nine-o'-clock precisely. I have already established correspondences in these several places, and received very good intelligence.

"By my last advices from Knightsbridge I hear that a horse was clapped into the pound on the third instant, and that he was not released when the letters came away.

"We are informed from Pankridge,[1] that a dozen weddings were lately celebrated in the mother-church of that place, but are referred to their next letters for the names of the parties concerned.

"Letters from Brompton advise, that the widow Blight had received several visits from John Mildew, which affords great matter of speculation in those parts.

"By a fisherman which lately touched at Hammersmith, there is advice from Putney, that a certain person, well known in that place, is like to lose his election for

[1] Pancras.

churchwarden; but this being boat-news, we cannot give entire credit to it.

"Letters from Paddington bring little more than that William Squeak, the sow-gelder, passed through that place the fifth instant.

"They advise from Fulham, that things remained there in the same state they were. They had intelligence, just as the letters came away, of a tub of excellent ale just set a-broach at Parsons Green; but this wanted confirmation.

"I have here, sir, given you a specimen of the news with which I intend to entertain the town, and which, when drawn up regularly in the form of a newspaper, will, I doubt not, be very acceptable to many of those public-spirited readers, who take more delight in acquainting themselves with other people's business than their own. I hope a paper of this kind, which lets us know what is done near home, may be more useful to us than those which are filled with advices from Zug and Bender, and make some amends for that dearth of intelligence which we may justly apprehend from times of peace. If I find that you receive this project favourably, I will shortly trouble you with one or two more; and in the meantime am, most worthy sir, with all due respect,—Your most obedient and most humble servant."

The Spectator, No. 452. Friday, August 8, 1712.

CXXIV

The Whisperer

—Multa et præclara minantis.—Hor.

I shall this day lay before my reader a letter, written by the same hand with that of last Friday, which contained proposals for a printed newspaper that should take in the whole circle of the penny-post.

"Sir—The kind reception you gave my last Friday's letter, in which I broached my project of a newspaper, encourages me to lay before you two or three more; for you must know, sir, that we look upon you to be the Lowndes of the learned world, and cannot think any scheme practicable or rational before you have approved of it, though all the money we raise by it is on our own funds, and for our private use.

"I have often thought that a *News-letter of Whispers*, written every post, and sent about the kingdom, after the same manner as that of Mr. Dyer, Mr. Dawkes, or any other epistolary historian, might be highly gratifying to the public, as well as beneficial to the author. By whispers I mean those pieces of news which are communicated as secrets, and which bring a double pleasure to the hearer; first, as they are private history, and, in the next place, as they have always in them a dash of scandal. These are the two chief qualifications in an article of news, which recommend it in a more than ordinary manner

to the ears of the curious. Sickness of persons in high posts, twilight visits paid and received by ministers of state, clandestine courtships and marriages, secret amours, losses at play, applications for places, with their respective successes or repulses, are the materials in which I chiefly intend to deal. I have two persons, that are each of them the representative of a species, who are to furnish me with those whispers which I intend to convey to my correspondents. The first of these is Peter Hush, descended from the ancient family of the Hushes. The other is the old Lady Blast, who has a very numerous tribe of daughters in the two great cities of London and Westminster. Peter Hush has a whispering hole in most of the great coffee-houses about town. If you are alone with him in a wide room, he carries you up into a corner of it, and speaks in your ear. I have seen Peter seat himself in a company of seven or eight persons, whom he never saw before in his life; and after having looked about to see there was no one that overheard him, has communicated to them in a low voice, and under the seal of secrecy, the death of a great man in the country, who was perhaps a-fox-hunting the very moment this account was given of him. If upon your entering into a coffee-house you see a circle of heads bending over the table, and lying close by one another, it is ten to one but my friend Peter is among them. I have known Peter publishing the whisper of the day by eight o'clock in the morning at Garraway's, by twelve at Will's, and before two at the Smyrna. When Peter has thus

effectually launched a secret, I have been very pleased to hear people whispering it to one another at second hand, and spreading it about as their own; for you must know, sir, the great incentive to whispering is the ambition which every one has of being thought in the secret, and being looked upon as a man who has access to greater people than one would imagine. After having given you this account of Peter Hush, I proceed to that virtuous lady, the old Lady Blast, who is to communicate to me the private transactions of the crimp table, with all the arcana of the fair sex. The Lady Blast, you must understand, has such a particular malignity in her whisper, that it blights like an easterly wind, and withers every reputation that it breathes upon. She has a particular knack at making private weddings, and last winter married above five women of quality to their footmen. Her whisper can make an innocent young woman big with child, or fill an healthful young fellow with distempers that are not to be named. She can turn a visit into an intrigue, and a distant salute into an assignation. She can beggar the wealthy, and degrade the noble. In short, she can whisper men base or foolish, jealous or ill-natured, or, if occasion requires, can tell you the slips of their great-grandmothers, and traduce the memory of honest coachmen that have been in their graves above these hundred years. By these and the like helps, I question not but I shall furnish out a very handsome news-letter. If you approve my project, I shall begin to whisper by the very next post, and question not but

every one of my customers will be very well pleased with me, when he considers that every piece of news I send him is a word in his ear, and lets him into a secret.

" Having given you a sketch of this project, I shall, in the next place, suggest to you another for a monthly pamphlet, which I shall likewise submit to your Spectatorial wisdom. I need not tell you, sir, that there are several authors in France, Germany, and Holland, as well as in our own country, who publish every month what they call *An Account of the Works of the Learned*, in which they give us an abstract of all such books as are printed in any part of Europe. Now, sir, it is my design to publish every month *An Account of the Works of the Unlearned*. Several late productions of my own countrymen, who many of them make a very eminent figure in the illiterate world, encourage me in this undertaking. I may, in this work, possibly make a review of several pieces which have appeared in the foreign accounts above-mentioned, though they ought not to have been taken notice of in works which bear such a title. I may, likewise, take into consideration such pieces as appear, from time to time, under the names of those gentlemen who compliment one another in public assemblies by the title of the 'learned gentlemen.' Our party-authors will also afford me a great variety of subjects, not to mention editors, commentators, and others, who are often men of no learning, or, what is as bad, of no knowledge. I shall not enlarge upon this hint; but if you think anything can be made

of it, I shall set about it with all the pains and application that so useful a work deserves.—I am ever, most worthy sir," etc.

The Spectator, No. 457. Thursday, August 14, 1712.

CXXV

A Critical Edition

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas,
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.—MART.

I HAVE been very often disappointed of late years, when, upon examining the new edition of a classic author, I have found above half the volume taken up with various readings. When I have expected to meet with a learned note upon a doubtful passage in a Latin poet, I have only been informed, that such or such ancient manuscripts for an *et* write an *ac*, or of some other notable discovery of the like importance. Indeed, when a different reading gives us a different sense or a new elegance in an author, the editor does very well in taking notice of it; but when he only entertains us with the several ways of spelling the same word, and gathers together the various blunders and mistakes of twenty or thirty different transcribers, they only take up the time of the learned reader, and puzzle the minds of the ignorant. I have often fancied with myself how enraged an old Latin author would be, should he see the several absurdities in sense and grammar, which are imputed to him by some or other

of these various readings. In one he speaks nonsense; in another makes use of a word that was never heard of; and indeed there is scarce a solecism in writing which the best author is not guilty of, if we may be at liberty to read him in the words of some manuscript, which the laborious editor has thought fit to examine in the prosecution of his work.

I question not but the ladies and pretty fellows will be very curious to understand what it is that I have been hitherto talking of. I shall therefore give them a notion of this practice, by endeavouring to write after the manner of several persons who make an eminent figure in the republic of letters. To this end we will suppose that the following song is an old ode which I present to the public in a new edition, with the several various readings which I find of it in former editions and in ancient manuscripts. Those who cannot relish the various readings, will perhaps find their account in the song, which never before appeared in print.

My love was fickle once and changing,
Nor e'er would settle in my heart;
From beauty still to beauty ranging,
In every face I found a dart.

'Twas first a charming shape enslaved me,
An eye then gave the fatal stroke:
Till by her wit Corinna saved me,
And all my former fetters broke.

But now a long and lasting anguish
For Belvidera I endure:
Hourly I sigh and hourly languish,
Nor hope to find the wonted cure.

For here the false unconstant lover,
After a thousand beauties shown,
Does new surprising charms discover,
And finds variety in one.

Various Readings

Stanza the first, verse the first. *And changing.*] The *and* in some manuscripts is written thus, &, but that in the Cotton Library writes it in three distinct letters.

Verse the second. *Nor e'er would.*] Aldus reads it *ever would*; but as this would hurt the metre, we have restored it to its genuine reading, by observing that synaeresis which had been neglected by ignorant transcribers.

Ibid. *In my heart.*] Scaliger and others, *on my heart.*

Verse the fourth. *I found a dart.*] The Vatican manuscript for *I* reads *it*, but this must have been the hallucination of the transcriber, who probably mistook the dash of the *I* for a *T*.

Stanza the second, verse the second. *The fatal stroke.*] Scioppius, Salmasius, and many others, for *the* read *a*, but I have stuck to the usual reading.

Verse the third. *Till by her wit.*] Some manuscripts have it *his wit*, others *your*, others *their wit*. But as I find *Corinna* to be the name of a woman in other authors, I cannot doubt but it should be *her*.

Stanza the third, verse the first. *A long and lasting anguish.*] The German manuscript reads *a lasting passion*, but the rhyme will not admit it.

Verse the second. *For Belvidera I endure.*] Did not all the manuscripts reclaim, I should change *Belvidera* into *Pelvidera*; *Pelvis* being used by several of the ancient comic writers for a looking-glass, by which means the etymology of the word is very visible, and *Pelvidera* will signify a lady who often looks in her glass; as indeed she had very good reason, if she had all those beauties which our poet here ascribes to her.

Verse the third. *Hourly I sigh and hourly languish.*] Some for the word *hourly* read *daily*, and others *nightly*; the last has great authorities of its side.

Verse the fourth. *The wonted cure.*] The elder Stevens reads *wanted cure.*

Stanza the fourth, verse the second. *After a thousand beauties.*] In several copies we meet with a *hundred beauties*, by the usual error of the transcribers, who probably omitted a cypher, and had not taste enough to know that the word *thousand* was ten times a greater compliment to the poet's mistress than an *hundred.*

Verse the fourth. *And finds variety in one.*] Most of the ancient manuscripts have it *in two.* Indeed so many of them concur in this last reading, that I am very much in doubt whether it ought not to take place. There are but two reasons which incline me to the reading as I have published it: first, because the rhyme, and secondly, because the sense is preserved by it. It might likewise proceed from the oscitancy of transcribers, who, to dispatch their work the sooner, used to write all numbers in cypher, and seeing the

figure 1 followed by a little dash of the pen, as is customary in old manuscripts, they perhaps mistook the dash for a second figure, and by casting up both together, composed out of them the figure 2. But this I shall leave to the learned, without determining anything in a matter of so great uncertainty.

The Spectator, No. 470. Friday, August 29, 1712.

CXXVI

Asking Advice

—Quae res in se neque consilium neque modum
Habet ullum, eam consilio regere non potes.—TER.

IT is an old observation, which has been made of politicians who would rather ingratiate themselves with their sovereign than promote his real service, that they accommodate their counsels to his inclinations, and advise him to such actions only as his heart is naturally set upon. The privy-councillor of one in love must observe the same conduct, unless he would forfeit the friendship of the person who desires his advice. I have known several odd cases of this nature. Hipparchus was going to marry a common woman, but being resolved to do nothing without the advice of his friend Philander, he consulted him upon the occasion. Philander told him his mind freely, and represented his mistress to him in such strong colours, that the next morning he received a challenge for his pains, and before twelve o'clock was run through the

body by the man who had asked his advice. Celia was more prudent on the like occasion; she desired Leonilla to give her opinion freely upon a young fellow who made his addresses to her. Leonilla, to oblige her, told her with great frankness, that she looked upon him as one of the most worthless ——. Celia, foreseeing what a character she was to expect, begged her not to go on, for that she had been privately married to him above a fortnight. The truth of it is, a woman seldom asks advice before she has bought her wedding-clothes. When she has made her own choice, for form's sake she sends a *congé d'élire* to her friends.

If we look into the secret springs and motives that set people at work on these occasions, and put them upon asking advice, which they never intend to take, I look upon it to be none of the least, that they are incapable of keeping a secret which is so very pleasing to them. A girl longs to tell her confidant, that she hopes to be married in a little time, and in order to talk of the pretty fellow that dwells so much in her thoughts, asks her very gravely, what she would advise her to do in a case of so much difficulty. Why else should Melissa, who had not a thousand pounds in the world, go into every quarter of the town to ask her acquaintance whether they would advise her to take Tom Townly, that made his addresses to her with an estate of five thousand a year? 'Tis very pleasant on this occasion to hear the lady propose her doubts, and to see the pains she is at to get over them.

I must not here omit a practice that is in use among

the vainer part of our own sex, who will often ask a friend's advice in relation to a fortune whom they are never likely to come at. Will Honeycomb, who is now on the verge of threescore, took me aside not long since, and asked me in his most serious look, whether I would advise him to marry my Lady Betty Single, who, by the way, is one of the greatest fortunes about town. I stared him full in the face upon so strange a question; upon which he immediately gave me an inventory of her jewels and estate, adding, that he was resolved to do nothing in a matter of such consequence without my approbation. Finding he would have an answer, I told him, if he could get the lady's consent, he had mine. This is about the tenth match which, to my knowledge, Will has consulted his friends upon, without ever opening his mind to the party herself.

I have been engaged in this subject by the following letter, which comes to me from some notable young female scribe, who, by the contents of it, seems to have carried matters so far, that she is ripe for asking advice; but as I would not lose her goodwill, nor forfeit the reputation which I have with her for wisdom, I shall only communicate the letter to the public, without returning any answer to it.

"MR. SPECTATOR—Now, sir, the thing is this: Mr. Shapely is the prettiest gentleman about town. He is very tall, but not too tall neither. He dances like an angel. His mouth is made I don't know how, but 'tis the prettiest that I ever saw in my life. He is always

laughing, for he has an infinite deal of wit. If you did but see how he rolls his stockings! He has a thousand pretty fancies, and I am sure, if you saw him, you would like him. He is a very good scholar, and can talk Latin as fast as English. I wish you could but see him dance. Now you must understand poor Mr. Shapely has no estate; but how can he help that, you know? And yet my friends are so unreasonable as to be always teasing me about him, because he has no estate. But I am sure he has that that is better than an estate: for he is a good-natured, ingenious, modest, civil, tall, well-bred, handsome man, and I am obliged to him for his civilities ever since I saw him. I forgot to tell you that he has black eyes, and looks upon me now and then as if he had tears in them. And yet my friends are so unreasonable, that they would have me be uncivil to him. I have a good portion which they cannot hinder me of, and I shall be fourteen on the 29th day of August next, and am therefore willing to settle in the world as soon as I can, and so is Mr. Shapely. But everybody I advise with here is poor Mr. Shapely's enemy. I desire, therefore, you will give me your advice, for I know you are a wise man; and if you advise me well, I am resolved to follow it. I heartily wish you could see him dance, and am, sir, your most humble servant, B. D.

"He loves your *Spectators* mightily."

The Spectator, No. 475. Thursday, September 4, 1712.

CXXVII

Gardens

—An me ludit amabilis
Insania? audire et videor pios
Errare per lucos, amoenae
Quos et aquae subeunt et aurae.—HOR.

"SIR—Having lately read your essay on the pleasures of the imagination, I was so taken with your thoughts upon some of our English gardens, that I cannot forbear troubling you with a letter upon that subject. I am one, you must know, who am looked upon as an humorist in gardening. I have several acres about my house, which I call my garden, and which a skilful gardener would not know what to call. It is a confusion of kitchen and parterre, orchard and flower-garden, which lie so mixed and interwoven with one another, that if a foreigner who had seen nothing of our country should be conveyed into my garden at his first landing, he would look upon it as a natural wilderness, and one of the uncultivated parts of our country. My flowers grow up in several parts of the garden in the greatest luxuriancy and profusion. I am so far from being fond of any particular one, by reason of its rarity, that if I meet with any one in a field which pleases me, I give it a place in my garden. By this means, when a stranger walks with me, he is surprised to see several large spots of ground covered with ten thousand different colours, and has often singled out flowers that

he might have met with under a common hedge, in a field, or in a meadow, as some of the greatest beauties of the place. The only method I observe in this particular, is to range in the same quarter the products of the same season, that they may make their appearance together, and compose a picture of the greatest variety. There is the same irregularity in my plantations, which run into as great a wildness as their natures will permit. I take in none that do not naturally rejoice in the soil, and am pleased, when I am walking in a labyrinth of my own raising, not to know whether the next tree I shall meet with is an apple or an oak, an elm or a pear-tree. My kitchen has likewise its particular quarters assigned it; for besides the wholesome luxury which that place abounds with, I have always thought a kitchen-garden a more pleasant sight than the finest orangery or artificial green-house. I love to see everything in its perfection, and am more pleased to survey my rows of coleworts and cabbages, with a thousand nameless pot-herbs, springing up in their full fragrancy and verdure, than to see the tender plants of foreign countries kept alive by artificial heats, or withering in an air or soil that are not adapted to them. I must not omit, that there is a fountain rising in the upper part of my garden, which forms a little wandering rill, and administers to the pleasure as well as the plenty of the place. I have so conducted it, that it visits most of my plantations; and have taken particular care to let it run in the same manner as it

would do in an open field, so that it generally passes through banks of violets and primroses, plats of willow, or other plants, that seem to be of its own producing. There is another circumstance in which I am very particular, or, as my neighbours call me, very whimsical: as my garden invites into it all the birds of the country, by offering them the conveniency of springs and shades, solitude and shelter, I do not suffer any one to destroy their nests in the spring, or drive them from their usual haunts in fruit-time. I value my garden more for being full of blackbirds than cherries, and very frankly give them fruit for their songs. By this means I have always the music of the season in its perfection, and am highly delighted to see the jay or the thrush hopping about my walks, and shooting before my eye across the several little glades and alleys that I pass through. I think there are as many kinds of gardening as of poetry: your makers of parterres and flower-gardens are epigrammatists and sonneteers in this art; contrivers of bowers and grottos, treillages and cascades, are romance writers. Wise and London are our heroic poets; and if, as a critic, I may single out any passage of their works to commend, I shall take notice of that part in the upper garden at Kensington, which was at first nothing but a gravel-pit. It must have been a fine genius for gardening, that could have thought of forming such an unsightly hollow into so beautiful an area, and to have hit the eye with so uncommon and agreeable a scene as

that which it is now wrought into. To give this particular spot of ground the greater effect, they have made a very pleasing contrast; for as on one side of the walk you see this hollow basin, with its several little plantations lying so conveniently under the eye of the beholder, on the other side of it there appears a seeming mount, made up of trees rising one higher than another in proportion as they approach the centre. A spectator, who has not heard this account of it, would think this circular mount was not only a real one, but that it had been actually scooped out of that hollow space which I have before mentioned. I never yet met with any one who had walked in this garden, who was not struck with that part of it which I have here mentioned. As for myself, you will find, by the account which I have already given you, that my compositions in gardening are altogether after the Pindaric manner, and run into the beautiful wildness of nature, without affecting the nicer elegancies of art. What I am now going to mention, will perhaps deserve your attention more than anything I have yet said. I find that in the discourse which I spoke of at the beginning of my letter, you are against filling an English garden with evergreens; and indeed I am so far of your opinion, that I can by no means think the verdure of an evergreen comparable to that which shoots out annually, and clothes our trees in the summer season. But I have often wondered that those who are like myself, and love to live in gardens, have

never thought of contriving a winter garden, which would consist of such trees only as never cast their leaves. We have very often little snatches of sunshine and fair weather in the most uncomfortable parts of the year, and have frequently several days in November and January that are as agreeable as any in the finest months. At such times, therefore, I think there could not be a greater pleasure than to walk in such a winter garden as I have proposed. In the summer season the whole country blooms, and is a kind of garden, for which reason we are not so sensible of those beauties that at this time may be everywhere met with; but when nature is in her desolation, and presents us with nothing but bleak and barren prospects, there is something unspeakably cheerful in a spot of ground which is covered with trees that smile amidst all the rigours of winter, and give us a view of the most gay season in the midst of that which is the most dead and melancholy. I have so far indulged myself in this thought, that I have set apart a whole acre of ground for the executing of it. The walls are covered with ivy instead of vines. The laurel, the hornbeam, and the holly, with many other trees and plants of the same nature, grow so thick in it, that you cannot imagine a more lively scene. The glowing redness of the berries, with which they are hung at this time, vies with the verdure of their leaves, and are apt to inspire the heart of the beholder with that vernal delight which you have somewhere taken notice of in your former papers. It is very pleasant, at the same time, to see the several

kinds of birds retiring into this little green spot, and enjoying themselves among the branches and foliage, when my great garden, which I have before mentioned to you, does not afford a single leaf for their shelter.

"You must know, sir, that I look upon the pleasure which we take in a garden, as one of the most innocent delights in human life. A garden was the habitation of our first parents before the fall. It is naturally apt to fill the mind with calmness and tranquillity, and to lay all its turbulent passions at rest. It gives us a great insight into the contrivance and wisdom of Providence, and suggests innumerable subjects for meditation. I cannot but think the very complacency and satisfaction which a man takes in these works of nature, to be a laudable, if not a virtuous, habit of mind. For all which reasons I hope you will pardon the length of my present letter.—I am, sir," etc.

The Spectator, No. 477. Saturday, September 6, 1712.

CXXVIII

Coffee-House Politicians Again

—Uti non
Compositus melius cum Bitho Bacchius. In jus
Acres procurrunt— HOR.

IT is something pleasant enough to consider the different notions which different persons have of the same thing. If men of low condition very often set a value on things which are not prized by those who are in an higher

station of life, there are many things these esteem which are in no value among persons of an inferior rank. Common people are, in particular, very much astonished, when they hear of those solemn contests and debates which are made among the great upon the punctilios of a public ceremony; and wonder to hear that any business of consequence should be retarded by those little circumstances, which they represent to themselves as trifling and insignificant. I am mightily pleased with a porter's decision in one of Mr. Southern's plays,[1] which is founded upon that fine distress of a virtuous woman's marrying a second husband, while her first was yet living. The first husband, who was supposed to have been dead, returning to his house after a long absence, raises a noble perplexity for the tragic part of the play. In the meanwhile the nurse and the porter conferring upon the difficulties that would ensue in such a case, honest Sampson thinks the matter may be easily decided, and solves it very judiciously by the old proverb, that if his first master be still living, *The man must have his mare again*. There is nothing in my time which has so much surprised and confounded the greatest part of my honest countrymen, as the present controversy between Count Rechteren and Monsieur Mesnager, which employs the wise heads of so many nations, and holds all the affairs of Europe in suspense.[2]

[1] "*The Fatal Marriage, or the Innocent Adultery.*"—H. MORLEY.

[2] The negotiations for peace at Utrecht in 1712 were seriously delayed by a petty squabble between the lackeys of

Upon my going into a coffee-house yesterday, and lending an ear to the next table, which was encompassed with a circle of inferior politicians, one of them, after having read over the news very attentively, broke out into the following remarks. "I am afraid," says he, "this unhappy rupture between the footmen at Utrecht will retard the peace of Christendom. I wish the pope may not be at the bottom of it. His Holiness has a very good hand at fomenting a division, as the poor Swiss Cantons have lately experienced to their cost. If Mounsieur What-d'ye-call-him's domestics will not come to an accommodation, I do not know how the quarrel can be ended but by a religious war."

"Why truly," says a wiseacre that sat by him, "were I as the king of France, I would scorn to take part with the footmen of either side: here's all the business of Europe stands still, because Mounsieur Mesnager's man has had his head broke. If Count Rectrum had given them a pot of ale after it, all would have been well without any of this bustle; but they say he's a warm man, and does not care to be made mouths at."

Upon this, one that had held his tongue hitherto, began to exert himself; declaring that he was very well pleased the plenipotentiaries of our Christian princes took this matter into their serious consideration; for that lacqueys were never so saucy and pragmatical as

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Count Rechteren, one of the Dutch plenipotentiaries, and M. Mesnager, the French plenipotentiary. Of the two, Rechteren seems, in spite of his name, to have been the more in the wrong.

they are nowadays, and that he should be glad to see them taken down in the treaty of peace, if it might be done without prejudice to the public affairs.

One who sat at the other end of the table, and seemed to be in the interests of the French king, told them that they did not take the matter right, for that his most Christian Majesty did not resent this matter because it was an injury done to Monsieur Mesnager's footmen; "for," says he, "what are Monsieur Mesnager's footmen to him? but because it was done to his subjects. Now," says he, "let me tell you, it would look very odd for a subject of France to have a bloody nose, and his sovereign not to take notice of it. He is obliged in honour to defend his people against hostilities; and if the Dutch will be so insolent to a crowned head, as in anywise to cuff or kick those who are under his protection, I think he is in the right to call them to an account for it."

This distinction set the controversy upon a new foot, and seemed to be very well approved by most that heard it, till a little warm fellow, who declared himself a friend to the house of Austria, fell most unmercifully upon his Gallic Majesty, as encouraging his subjects to make mouths at their betters, and afterwards screening them from the punishment that was due to their insolence. To which he added, that the French nation was so addicted to grimace, that if there was not a stop put to it at the general congress, there would be no walking the streets for them in a time of peace, especially if they continued masters of the West Indies.

The little man proceeded with a great deal of warmth, declaring that, if the allies were of his mind, he would oblige the French king to burn his galleys and tolerate the Protestant religion in his dominions, before he would sheath his sword. He concluded with calling Mounsieur Mesnager an insignificant prig.

The dispute was now growing very warm, and one does not know where it would have ended, had not a young man of about one and twenty, who seems to have been brought up with an eye to the law, taken the debate into his hand, and given it as his opinion that neither Count Rechteren nor Mounsieur Mesnager had behaved themselves right in this affair. "Count Rechteren," says he, "should have made affidavit that his servants had been affronted, and then Mounsieur Mesnager would have done him justice by taking away their liveries from them, or some other way that he might have thought the most proper; for let me tell you, if a man makes a mouth at me, I am not to knock the teeth out of it for his pains. Then again, as for Mounsieur Mesnager, upon his servant's being beaten, why! he might have had his action of assault and battery. But as the case now stands, if you will have my opinion, I think they ought to bring it to referees."

I heard a great deal more of this conference, but I must confess with little edification; for all I could learn at last from these honest gentlemen was, that the matter in debate was of too high a nature for such heads as theirs, or mine, to comprehend.

The Spectator, No. 481. Thursday, September 11, 1712.

CXXXIX

Dreams

—Cum prostrata sopore
Urget membra quies, et mens sine pondere ludit.—PETR.

THOUGH there are many authors who have written on dreams, they have generally considered them only as revelations of what has already happened in distant parts of the world, or as presages of what is to happen in future periods of time.

I shall consider this subject in another light, as dreams may give us some idea of the great excellency of an human soul, and some intimation of its independency on matter.

In the first place, our dreams are great instances of that activity which is natural to the human soul, and which it is not in the power of sleep to deaden or abate. When the man appears tired and worn out with the labours of the day, this active part in his composition is still busied and unwearied. When the organs of sense want their due repose and necessary reparations, and the body is no longer able to keep pace with that spiritual substance to which it is united, the soul exerts herself in her several faculties, and continues in action till her partner is again qualified to bear her company. In this case dreams look like the relaxations and amusements of the soul when she is disencumbered of her machine, her sports and recreations when she has laid her charge asleep.

In the second place, dreams are an instance of that agility and perfection which is natural to the faculties of the mind, when they are disengaged from the body. The soul is clogged and retarded in her operations, when she acts in conjunction with a companion that is so heavy and unwieldy in its motions. But in dreams it is wonderful to observe with what a sprightliness and alacrity she exerts herself. The slow of speech make unpremeditated harangues, or converse readily in languages that they are but little acquainted with. The grave abound in pleasantries, the dull in repartees and points of wit. There is not a more painful action of the mind than invention; yet in dreams it works with that ease and activity, that we are not sensible when the faculty is employed. For instance, I believe every one, some time or other, dreams that he is reading papers, books, or letters; in which case the invention prompts so readily, that the mind is imposed upon, and mistakes its own suggestions for the compositions of another.

I shall, under this head, quote a passage out of the *Religio Medici*, in which the ingenious author gives an account of himself in his dreaming and his waking thoughts. "We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity my ascendant was the watery sign of Scorpius: I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn,

and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams; and this time also would I choose for my devotions: but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that that has passed.—Thus it is observed that men sometimes, upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves; for then the soul, beginning to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality."

We may likewise observe in the third place, that the passions affect the mind with greater strength when we are asleep, than when we are awake. Joy and sorrow give us more vigorous sensations of pain or pleasure at this time than at any other. Devotion likewise, as the excellent author above-mentioned has hinted, is in a very particular manner heightened and inflamed, when it rises in the soul at a time that the body is thus laid at rest. Every man's experience will inform him in this matter, though it is very probable that this may happen differently in different constitutions. I shall conclude this head with the two following problems, which I shall leave to the solution of my

reader. Supposing a man always happy in his dreams, and miserable in his waking thoughts, and that his life was equally divided between them, whether would he be more happy or miserable? Were a man a king in his dreams, and a beggar awake, and dreamt as consequentially and in as continued unbroken schemes as he thinks when awake, whether he would be in reality a king or beggar, or rather whether he would not be both?

There is another circumstance, which methinks gives us a very high idea of the nature of the soul in regard to what passes in dreams, I mean that innumerable multitude and variety of ideas which then arise in her. Were that active watchful being only conscious of her own existence at such a time, what a painful solitude would her hours of sleep be? Were the soul sensible of her being alone in her sleeping moments, after the same manner that she is sensible of it while awake, the time would hang very heavy on her, as it often actually does when she dreams that she is in such a solitude:

> —*Semperque relinqui*
> *Sola sibi, semper longam incomitata videtur*
> *Ire viam*— VIRG.

But this observation I only make by the way. What I would here remark is that wonderful power in the soul of producing her own company upon these occasions. She converses with numberless beings of her own creation, and is transported into ten thousand scenes of her own raising. She is herself the theatre,

the actors, and the beholder. This puts me in mind of a saying which I am infinitely pleased with, and which Plutarch ascribes to Heraclitus, "That all men whilst they are awake are in one common world; but that each of them, when he is asleep, is in a world of his own." The waking man is conversant in the world of nature; when he sleeps he retires to a private world that is particular to himself. There seems something in this consideration that intimates to us a natural grandeur and perfection in the soul, which is rather to be admired than explained.

I must not omit that argument for the excellency of the soul, which I have seen quoted out of Tertullian, namely, its power of divining in dreams. That several such divinations have been made, none can question who believes the holy writings, or who has but the least degree of a common historical faith, there being innumerable instances of this nature in several authors, both ancient and modern, sacred and profane. Whether such dark presages, such visions of the night, proceed from any latent power in the soul during this her state of abstraction, or from any communication with the Supreme Being, or from any operation of subordinate spirits, has been a great dispute among the learned; the matter of fact is, I think, incontestable, and has been looked upon as such by the greatest writers, who have been never suspected either of superstition or enthusiasm.

I do not suppose that the soul in these instances is entirely loose and unfettered from the body: it is

sufficient, if she is not so far sunk and immersed in matter, nor entangled and perplexed in her operations with such motions of blood and spirits, as when she actuates the machine in its waking hours. The corporeal union is slackened enough to give the mind more play. The soul seems gathered within herself, and recovers that spring which is broke and weakened, when she operates more in concert with the body.

The speculations I have here made, if they are not arguments, they are at least strong intimations, not only of the excellency of an human soul but of its independence on the body; and if they do not prove, do at least confirm these two great points, which are established by many other reasons that are altogether unanswerable.

The Spectator, No. 487. Thursday, September 18, 1712.

CXXX

The Price of the Spectator

Quanti emptae? Parvo. Quanti ergo? Octo assibus. Eheu!
HOR.

I FIND, by several letters which I receive daily, that many of my readers would be better pleased to pay three-halfpence for my paper than twopence. The ingenious T. W. tells me, that I have deprived him of the best part of his breakfast, for that since the rise of my paper, he is forced every morning to drink his dish of coffee by itself, without the addition of the

Spectator, that used to be better than lace to it. Eugenius informs me very obligingly, that he never thought he should have disliked any passage in my paper, but that of late there have been two words in every one of them, which he could heartily wish left out, viz. "Price Twopence." I have a letter from a soap-boiler, who condoles with me very affectionately upon the necessity we both lie under of setting an higher price on our commodities, since the late tax has been laid upon them, and desiring me, when I write next on that subject, to speak a word or two upon the present duties on Castle-soap. But there is none of these my correspondents who writes with a greater turn of good sense and elegance of expression than the generous Philomedes, who advises me to value every *Spectator* at sixpence, and promises that he himself will engage for above a hundred of his acquaintance, who shall take it in at that price.

Letters from the female world are likewise come to me, in great quantities, upon the same occasion; and as I naturally bear a great deference to this part of our species, I am very glad to find that those who approve my conduct in this particular, are much more numerous than those who condemn it. A large family of daughters have drawn me up a very handsome remonstrance, in which they set forth, that their father having refused to take in the *Spectator*, since the additional price was set upon it, they offered him unanimously to bate him the article of bread and butter in the tea-table account, provided the *Spectator*

might be served up to them every morning as usual. Upon this the old gentleman, being pleased, it seems, with their desire of improving themselves, has granted them the continuance both of the *Spectator* and their bread and butter; having given particular orders that the tea-table shall be set forth every morning with its customary bill of fare, and without any manner of defalcation. I thought myself obliged to mention this particular, as it does honour to this worthy gentleman; and if the young lady Laetitia, who sent me this account, will acquaint me with his name, I will insert it at length in one of my papers, if he desires it.

I should be very glad to find out any expedient that might alleviate the expense which this my paper brings to any of my readers; and, in order to it, must propose two points to their consideration. First, that if they retrench any the smallest particular in their ordinary expense, it will easily make up the halfpenny a day, which we have now under consideration. Let a lady sacrifice but a single ribbon to her morning studies, and it will be sufficient: let a family burn but a candle a night less than the usual number, and they may take in the *Spectator* without detriment to their private affairs.

In the next place, if my readers will not go to the price of buying my papers by retail, let them have patience, and they may buy them in the lump, without the burden of a tax upon them. My speculations, when they are sold single, like cherries upon the stick, are delights for the rich and wealthy; after some time

they come to market in greater quantities, and are every ordinary man's money. The truth of it is, they have a certain flavour at their first appearance, from several accidental circumstances of time, place, and person, which they may lose if they are not taken early; but in this case every reader is to consider, whether it is not better for him to be half a year behind-hand with the fashionable and polite part of the world, than to strain himself beyond his circumstances. My bookseller has now about ten thousand of the third and fourth volumes, which he is ready to publish, having already disposed of as large an edition both of the first and second volume. As he is a person whose head is very well turned to his business, he thinks they would be a very proper present to be made to persons at christenings, marriages, visiting-days, and the like joyful solemnities, as several other books are frequently given at funerals. He has printed them in such a little portable volume, that many of them may be ranged together upon a single plate; and is of opinion that a salver of *Spectators* would be as acceptable an entertainment to the ladies, as a salver of sweetmeats.

I shall conclude this paper with an epigram lately sent to the writer of the *Spectator*, after having returned my thanks to the ingenious author of it.

"SIR—Having heard the following epigram very much commended, I wonder that it has not yet had a place in any of your papers; I think the suffrage of our Poet Laureate should not be overlooked, which

shows the opinion he entertains of your paper, whether the notion he proceeds upon be true or false. I make bold to convey it to you, not knowing if it has yet come to your hands.

ON THE SPECTATOR, BY MR. TATE.

—Aliusque et idem
Nasceris— HOR.

When first the *Tatler* to a mute was turned,
Great Britain for her Censor's silence mourned:
Robbed of his sprightly beams, she wept the night,
Till the *Spectator* rose, and blazed as bright.
So the first man the sun's first setting viewed,
And sighed, till circling day his joys renewed;
Yet doubtful how that second sun to name,
Whether a bright successor, or the same.
So we: but now from this suspense are freed,
Since all agree, who both with judgment read,
'Tis the same sun, and does himself succeed."

The Spectator, No. 488. Friday, September 19, 1712.

CXXXI

Religious Melancholy

Ægritudinem laudare, unam rem maxime detestabilem, quorum est tandem philosophorum?—CIC.

ABOUT an age ago it was the fashion in England, for every one that would be thought religious, to throw as much sanctity as possible into his face, and in particular to abstain from all appearances of mirth and pleasantry, which were looked upon as the marks of a carnal mind. The saint was of a sorrowful countenance, and generally

eaten up with spleen and melancholy. A gentleman, who was lately a great ornament to the learned world, has diverted me more than once with an account of the reception which he met with from a very famous Independent minister, who was head of a college in those times.[1] This gentleman was then a young adventurer in the republic of letters, and just fitted out for the university with a good cargò of Latin and Greek. His friends were resolved that he should try his fortune at an election which was drawing near in the college, of which the Independent minister whom I have before mentioned was governor. The youth, according to custom, waited on him in order to be examined. He was received at the door by a servant, who was one of that gloomy generation that were then in fashion. He conducted him, with great silence and seriousness, to a long gallery which was darkened at noonday, and had only a single candle burning in it. After a short stay in this melancholy apartment, he was led into a chamber hung with black, where he entertained himself for some time by the glimmering of a taper, till at length the head of the college came out to him from an inner room, with half a dozen nightcaps upon his head, and religious horror in his countenance. The young man trembled; but his fears increased when, instead of being asked what progress he had made in learning, he was examined how he abounded in grace. His Latin and Greek stood

[1] This divine is said to have been Dr. Thomas Goodwin, who was President of Magdalen College, Oxford, during the Commonwealth.

him in little stead; he was to give an account only of the state of his soul, whether he was of the number of the elect; what was the occasion of his conversion; upon what day of the month and hour of the day it happened; how it was carried on, and when completed. The whole examination was summed up with one short question, namely, "Whether he was prepared for death?" The boy, who had been bred up by honest parents, was frighted out of his wits at the solemnity of the proceeding, and by the last dreadful interrogatory; so that upon making his escape out of this house of mourning, he could never be brought a second time to the examination, as not being able to go through the terrors of it.

Notwithstanding this general form and outside of religion is pretty well worn out among us, there are many persons, who, by a natural uncheerfulness of heart, mistaken notions of piety, or weakness of understanding, love to indulge this uncomfortable way of life, and give up themselves a prey to grief and melancholy. Superstitious fears and groundless scruples cut them off from the pleasures of conversation, and all those social entertainments which are not only innocent, but laudable; as if mirth was made for reprobates, and cheerfulness of heart denied those who are the only persons that have a proper title to it.

Sombrius is one of these sons of sorrow. He thinks himself obliged in duty to be sad and disconsolate. He looks on a sudden fit of laughter as a breach of his baptismal vow. An innocent jest startles him like

blasphemy. Tell him of one who is advanced to a title of honour, he lifts up his hands and eyes; describe a public ceremony, he shakes his head; show him a gay equipage, he blesses himself. All the little ornaments of life are pomps and vanities. Mirth is wanton, and wit profane. He is scandalized at youth for being lively, and at childhood for being playful. He sits at a christening or a marriage-feast as at a funeral; sighs at the conclusion of a merry story, and grows devout when the rest of the company grow pleasant. After all, Sombrius is a religious man, and would have behaved himself very properly, had he lived when Christianity was under a general persecution.

I would by no means presume to tax such characters with hypocrisy, as is done too frequently, that being a vice which I think none but He, who knows the secrets of men's hearts, should pretend to discover in another, where the proofs of it do not amount to a demonstration. On the contrary, as there are many excellent persons who are weighed down by this habitual sorrow of heart, they rather deserve our compassion than our reproaches. I think, however, they would do well to consider, whether such a behaviour does not deter men from a religious life, by representing it as an unsocial state, that extinguishes all joy and gladness, darkens the face of nature, and destroys the relish of being itself.

I have, in former papers, shown how great a tendency there is to cheerfulness in religion, and how such a frame of mind is not only the most lovely, but

the most commendable in a virtuous person. In short, those who represent religion in so unamiable a light are like the spies sent by Moses to make a discovery of the Land of Promise, when by their reports they discouraged the people from entering upon it. Those who show us the joy, the cheerfulness, the good-humour, that naturally spring up in this happy state, are like the spies bringing along with them the clusters of grapes and delicious fruits, that might invite their companions into the pleasant country which produced them.

An eminent pagan writer has made a discourse to show that the atheist, who denies a God, does him less dishonour than the man who owns his being, but at the same time believes him to be cruel, hard to please, and terrible to human nature. "For my own part," says he, "I would rather it should be said of me, that there was never any such man as Plutarch, than that Plutarch was ill-natured, capricious, or inhuman."

If we may believe our logicians, man is distinguished from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter. He has an heart capable of mirth and naturally disposed to it. It is not the business of virtue to extirpate the affections of the mind, but to regulate them. It may moderate and restrain, but was not designed to banish gladness from the heart of man. Religion contracts the circle of our pleasures, but leaves it wide enough for her votaries to expatiate in. The contemplation of the Divine Being, and the exercise of virtue, are in their own nature so far from excluding all gladness of heart, that they are perpetual sources of it. In a word,

the true spirit of religion cheers as well as composes the soul; it banishes indeed all levity of behaviour, all vicious and dissolute mirth, but in exchange fills the mind with a perpetual serenity, uninterrupted cheerfulness, and an habitual inclination to please others, as well as to be pleased in itself.

The Spectator, No. 494. Friday, September 26, 1712.

CXXXII

Will Honeycomb's Dream

—Nimis uncis
Naribus indulges— PERS.

My friend Will Honeycomb has told me, for above this half year, that he had a great mind to try his hand at a *Spectator*, and that he would fain have one of his writing in my works. This morning I received from him the following letter, which, after having rectified some little orthographical mistakes, I shall make a present of to the public.

"DEAR SPEC—I was about two nights ago in company with very agreeable young people of both sexes, where talking of some of your papers which are written on conjugal love, there arose a dispute among us, whether there were not more bad husbands in the world than bad wives. A gentleman, who was advocate for the ladies, took this occasion to tell us the story of a famous siege in Germany, which I have since found related in my historical dictionary after the following

manner. When the emperor Conrade the Third had besieged Guelphus, duke of Bavaria, in the city of Hensberg, the women, finding that the town could not possibly hold out long, petitioned the emperor that they might depart out of it, with so much as each of them could carry. The emperor, knowing they could not convey away many of their effects, granted them their petition; when the women, to his great surprise, came out of the place with every one her husband upon her back. The emperor was so moved at the sight that he burst into tears, and after having very much extolled the women for their conjugal affection, gave the men to their wives, and received the duke into his favour.

"The ladies did not a little triumph at this story, asking us at the same time whether in our consciences we believed that the men of any town in Great Britain would, upon the same offer and at the same conjuncture, have loaden themselves with their wives; or rather, whether they would not have been glad of such an opportunity to get rid of them? To this my very good friend Tom Dapperwit, who took upon him to be the mouth of our sex, replied, that they would be very much to blame if they would not do the same good office for the women, considering that their strength would be greater, and their burdens lighter. As we were amusing ourselves with discourses of this nature, in order to pass away the evening, which now begins to grow tedious, we fell into that laudable and primitive diversion of questions and commands. I

was no sooner vested with the regal authority, but I enjoined all the ladies, under pain of my displeasure, to tell the company ingenuously, in case they had been in the siege above-mentioned, and had the same offers made them as the good women of that place, what every one of them would have brought off with her, and have thought most worth the saving? There were several merry answers made to my question, which entertained us till bedtime. This filled my mind with such a huddle of ideas, that upon my going to sleep I fell into the following dream.

"I saw a town of this island, which shall be nameless, invested on every side, and the inhabitants of it so straitened as to cry for quarter. The general refused any other terms than those granted to the above-mentioned town of Hensberg, namely, that the married women might come out with what they could bring along with them. Immediately the city gates flew open, and a female procession appeared, multitudes of the sex following one another in a row, and staggering under their respective burdens. I took my stand upon an eminence in the enemies' camp, which was appointed for the general rendezvous of these female carriers, being very desirous to look into their several ladings. The first of them had a huge sack upon her shoulders, which she set down with great care: upon the opening of it, when I expected to have seen her husband shot out of it, I found it was filled with china ware. The next appeared in a more decent figure, carrying a handsome young fellow upon her back: I could not forbear

commending the young woman for her conjugal affection, when, to my great surprise, I found that she had left the good man at home, and brought away her gallant. I saw the third, at some distance, with a little withered face peeping over her shoulder, whom I could not suspect for any but her spouse, till upon her setting him down I heard her call him dear Pug, and found him to be her favourite monkey. A fourth brought a huge bale of cards along with her; and the fifth a Bolonia lap-dog; for her husband, it seems, being a very burly man, she thought it would be less trouble for her to bring away little Cupid. The next was the wife of a rich usurer, loaden with a bag of gold; she told us that her spouse was very old, and by the course of nature could not expect to live long; and that to show her tender regards for him, she had saved that which the poor man loved better than his life. The next came towards us with her son upon her back, who, we were told, was the greatest rake in the place, but so much the mother's darling that she left her husband behind, with a large family of hopeful sons and daughters, for the sake of this graceless youth.

"It would be endless to mention the several persons, with their several loads, that appeared to me in this strange vision. All the place about me was covered with packs of ribbon, brocades, embroidery, and ten thousand other materials, sufficient to have furnished a whole street of toy-shops. One of the women, having an husband that was none of the heaviest, was bringing

him off upon her shoulders, at the same time that she carried a great bundle of Flanders lace under her arm; but finding herself so over-loaden that she could not save both of them, she dropped the good man, and brought away the bundle. In short, I found but one husband among this great mountain of baggage, who was a lively cobbler, that kicked and spurred all the while his wife was carrying him on, and, as it was said, had scarce passed a day in his life without giving her the discipline of the strap.

"I cannot conclude my letter, dear Spec, without telling thee one very odd whim in this my dream. I saw, methought, a dozen women employed in bringing off one man; I could not guess who it should be, till upon his nearer approach I discovered thy short phiz. The women all declared that it was for the sake of thy works, and not thy person, that they brought thee off, and that it was on condition that thou shouldst continue the *Spectator*. If thou thinkest this dream will make a tolerable one, it is at thy service, from, dear Spec, thine, sleeping and waking,

"WILL HONEYCOMB."

The ladies will see by this letter, what I have often told them, that Will is one of those old-fashioned men of wit and pleasure of the town, that shows his parts by raillery on marriage, and one who has often tried his fortune that way without success. I cannot, however, dismiss his letter without observing, that the true story on which it is built does honour to the sex, and that in

order to abuse them the writer is obliged to have recourse to dream and fiction.

The Spectator, No. 499. Thursday, October 2, 1712.

CXXXIII

The Death of Sir Roger de Coverley

Heu pietas! heu prisca fides! - VIRG.

WE last night received a piece of ill news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley is dead. He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks' sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he succeeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a Whig justice of peace, who was always Sir Roger's enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and Captain Sentry, which mention nothing of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honour of the good old man. I have likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others

have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter, without any alteration or diminution.

"HONOURED SIR—Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighbouring gentleman; for you know, sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom; and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed we were once in great hope of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life; but this only proved a lightning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother: he has bequeathed the fine white gelding, that he used to ride a-hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him, and has left you all his books. He has, moreover, bequeathed

to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning, to every man in the parish a great frieze coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown grey-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church; for he was heard to say some time ago, that if he lived two years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells everybody that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys on the left hand of his father Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the quorum: the whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits, the men in frieze, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the hall-house and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he shook him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make a good use of it, and to pay the several

legacies, and the gifts of charity which he told him he had left as quit-rents upon the estate. The captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of those whom my master loved, and shows great kindness to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never joyed himself since; no more has any of us. 'Twas the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This being all from, honoured sir, your most sorrowful servant,

"EDWARD BISCUIT.

"*P.S.*—My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book which comes up to you by the carrier should be given to Sir Andrew Freeport, in his name."

This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler's manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew, opening the book, found it to be a collection of acts of parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger's own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points, which he had disputed with Sir Roger the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man's handwriting, burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain

Sentry informs me, that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club.

The Spectator, No. 517. Thursday, October 23, 1712.

CXXXIV

The Scale of Animated Being

Inde hominum pecudumque genus, vitaeque volantum,
Et quae marmoreo fert monstra sub aequore pontus.

VIRG.

THOUGH there is a great deal of pleasure in contemplating the material world, by which I mean that system of bodies into which nature has so curiously wrought the mass of dead matter, with the several relations which those bodies bear to one another; there is still, methinks, something more wonderful and surprising in contemplations on the world of life, by which I mean all those animals with which every part of the universe is furnished. The material world is only the shell of the universe: the world of life are its inhabitants.

If we consider those parts of the material world which lie the nearest to us, and are therefore subject to our observations and inquiries, it is amazing to consider the infinity of animals with which it is stocked. Every part of matter is peopled: every green leaf swarms with inhabitants. There is scarce a single humour in the body of a man, or of any other animal, in which our glasses do not discover myriads of living creatures. The surface of animals is also covered with

other animals, which are in the same manner the basis of other animals that live upon it; nay, we find in the most solid bodies, as in marble itself, innumerable cells and cavities that are crowded with such imperceptible inhabitants, as are too little for the naked eye to discover. On the other hand, if we look into the more bulky parts of nature, we see the seas, lakes, and rivers teeming with numberless kinds of living creatures: we find every mountain and marsh, wilderness and wood, plentifully stocked with birds and beasts, and every part of matter affording proper necessaries and conveniences for the livelihood of multitudes which inhabit it.

The author of the *Plurality of Worlds* draws a very good argument from this consideration, for the peopling of every planet; as indeed it seems very probable from the analogy of reason, that if no part of matter, which we are acquainted with, lies waste and useless, those great bodies which are at such a distance from us should not be desert and unpeopled, but rather that they should be furnished with beings adapted to their respective situations.

Existence is a blessing to those beings only which are endowed with perception, and is in a manner thrown away upon dead matter, any further than as it is subservient to beings which are conscious of their existence. Accordingly we find, from the bodies which lie under our observation, that matter is only made as the basis and support of animals, and that there is no more of the one, than what is necessary for the existence of the other.

Infinite goodness is of so communicative a nature, that it seems to delight in the conferring of existence upon every degree of perceptive being. As this is a speculation which I have often pursued with great pleasure to myself, I shall enlarge farther upon it, by considering that part of the scale of beings which comes within our knowledge.

There are some living creatures which are raised but just above dead matter. To mention only that species of shellfish which are formed in the fashion of a cone, that grow to the surface of several rocks, and immediately die upon their being severed from the place where they grow. There are many other creatures but one remove from these, which have no other sense besides that of feeling and taste. Others have still an additional one of hearing; others of smell, and others of sight. It is wonderful to observe, by what a gradual progress the world of life advances through a prodigious variety of species, before a creature is formed that is complete in all its senses; and even among these there is such a different degree of perfection in the sense which one animal enjoys beyond what appears in another, that though the sense in different animals be distinguished by the same common denomination, it seems almost of a different nature. If after this we look into the several inward perfections of cunning and sagacity, or what we generally call instinct, we find them rising after the same manner imperceptibly one above another, and receiving additional improvements, according to the species in which they are

implanted. This progress in nature is so very gradual, that the most perfect of an inferior species comes very near to the most imperfect of that which is immediately above it.

The exuberant and overflowing goodness of the Supreme Being, whose mercy extends to all his works, is plainly seen, as I have before hinted, from his having made so very little matter, at least what falls within our knowledge, that does not swarm with life: nor is his goodness less seen in the diversity than in the multitude of living creatures. Had he only made one species of animals, none of the rest would have enjoyed the happiness of existence; he has, therefore, specified in his creation every degree of life, every capacity of being. The whole chasm in nature, from a plant to a man, is filled up with diverse kinds of creatures, rising one over another by such a gentle and easy ascent, that the little transitions and deviations from one species to another are almost insensible. This intermediate space is so well husbanded and managed, that there is scarce a degree of perception which does not appear in some one part of the world of life. Is the goodness or wisdom of the Divine Being more manifested in this his proceeding?

There is a consequence, besides those I have already mentioned, which seems very naturally deducible from the foregoing considerations. If the scale of being rises by such a regular progress so high as man, we may by a parity of reason suppose that it still proceeds gradually through those beings which are of a superior

nature to him ; since there is an infinitely greater space and room for different degrees of perfection between the Supreme Being and man, than between man and the most despicable insect. This consequence of so great a variety of beings which are superior to us, from that variety which is inferior to us, is made by Mr. Locke in a passage [1] which I shall here set down, after having premised, that notwithstanding there is such infinite room between man and his Maker for the creative power to exert itself in, it is impossible that it should ever be filled up, since there will be still an infinite gap or distance between the highest created being and the power which produced him.

" That there should be more species of intelligent creatures above us than there are of sensible and material below us, is probable to me from hence ; that in all the visible corporeal world we see no chasms or no gaps. All quite down from us the descent is by easy steps, and a continued series of things, that in each remove differ very little one from the other. There are fishes that have wings, and are not strangers to the airy region : and there are some birds that are inhabitants of the water, whose blood is cold as fishes', and their flesh so like in taste, that the scrupulous are allowed them on fish-days. There are animals so near of kin both to birds and beasts, that they are in the middle between both : amphibious animals link the terrestrial and aquatic together ; seals live at land and

[1] *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, bk. iii. chap. vi. § 12.

at sea, and porpoises have the warm blood and entrails of a hog; not to mention what is confidently reported of mermaids or sea-men. There are some brutes that seem to have as much knowledge and reason as some that are called men; and the animal and vegetable kingdoms are so nearly joined, that if you will take the lowest of one and the highest of the other, there will scarce be perceived any great difference between them: and so on till we come to the lowest and the most inorganical parts of matter, we shall find everywhere that the several species are linked together, and differ but in almost insensible degrees. And when we consider the infinite power and wisdom of the Maker, we have reason to think that it is suitable to the magnificent harmony of the universe, and the great design and infinite goodness of the Architect, that the species of creatures should also, by gentle degrees, ascend upward from us toward his infinite perfection, as we see they gradually descend from us downward: which if it be probable, we have reason then to be persuaded, that there are far more species of creatures above us than there are beneath; we being in degrees of perfection much more remote from the infinite being of God, than we are from the lowest state of being, and that which approaches nearest to nothing. And yet of all those distinct species we have no clear distinct ideas."

In this system of being, there is no creature so wonderful in its nature, and which so much deserves our particular attention, as man, who fills up the middle space between the animal and intellectual nature, the

visible and invisible world, and is that link in the chain of beings which has been often termed the *nexus utriusque mundi*. So that he, who in one respect being associated with angels and archangels, may look upon a Being of infinite perfection as his father, and the highest order of spirits as his brethren, may in another respect say to corruption, "Thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister."

The Spectator, No. 519. Saturday, October 25, 1712.

CXXXV

Stale Mythology

—Nunc augur Apollo
Nunc Lyciae sortes, nunc et Jove missus ab ipso
Interpres divûm fert horrida jussa per auras.
Scilicet is superis labor— VIRG.

I AM always highly delighted with the discovery of any rising genius among my countrymen. For this reason I have read over, with great pleasure, the late miscellany published by Mr. Pope, in which there are many excellent compositions of that ingenious gentleman. I have had a pleasure of the same kind, in perusing a poem that is just published, *On the Prospect of Peace*,[1] and which I hope will meet with such a reward from its patrons, as so noble a performance deserves. I was particularly well pleased to find that the author had not amused himself with fables out of the pagan

[1] By Thomas Tickell, the friend of Addison and the editor of his works.

theology, and that when he hints at anything of this nature, he alludes to it only as to a fable.

Many of our modern authors, whose learning very often extends no farther than Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, do not know how to celebrate a great man without mixing a parcel of schoolboy tales with the recital of his actions. If you read a poem on a fine woman among the authors of this class, you shall see that it turns more upon Venus or Helen than on the party concerned. I have known a copy of verses on a great hero highly commended; but upon asking to hear some of the beautiful passages, the admirer of it has repeated to me a speech of Apollo, or a description of Polypheme. At other times, when I have searched for the actions of a great man, who gave a subject to the writer, I have been entertained with the exploits of a river-god, or have been forced to attend a fury in her mischievous progress, from one end of the poem to the other. When we are at school it is necessary for us to be acquainted with the system of pagan theology, and may be allowed to enliven a theme or point an epigram with an heathen god; but when we would write a manly panegyric, that should carry in it all the colours of truth, nothing can be more ridiculous than to have recourse to our Jupiters and Junos.

No thought is beautiful which is not just, and no thought can be just which is not founded in truth, or at least in that which passes for such.

In mock-heroic poems, the use of the heathen mythology is not only excusable but graceful, because it is

the design of such compositions to divert, by adapting the fabulous machines of the ancients to low subjects, and at the same time by ridiculing such kinds of machinery in modern writers. If any are of opinion, that there is a necessity of admitting these classical legends into our serious compositions, in order to give them a more poetical turn, I would recommend to their consideration the *Pastorals* of Mr. Philips. One would have thought it impossible for this kind of poetry to have subsisted without fauns and satyrs, wood-nymphs and water-nymphs, with all the tribe of rural deities. But we see he has given a new life and a more natural beauty to this way of writing, by substituting in the place of these antiquated fables the superstitious mythology which prevails among the shepherds of our own country.

Virgil and Homer might compliment their heroes by interweaving the actions of deities with their achievements; but for a Christian author to write in the pagan creed, to make Prince Eugene a favourite of Mars, or to carry on a correspondence between Bellona and the Marshal de Villars, would be downright puerility, and unpardonable in a poet that is past sixteen. It is want of sufficient elevation in a genius to describe realities and place them in a shining light, that makes him have recourse to such trifling antiquated fables; as a man may write a fine description of Bacchus or Apollo, that does not know how to draw the character of any of his contemporaries.

In order, therefore, to put a stop to this absurd

practice, I shall publish the following edict, by virtue of that Spectatorial authority with which I stand invested.

"WHEREAS the time of a general peace is, in all appearance, drawing near, being informed that there are several ingenious persons who intend to show their talents on so happy an occasion, and being willing, as much as in me lies, to prevent that effusion of nonsense which we have good cause to apprehend; I do hereby strictly require every person, who shall write on this subject, to remember that he is a Christian, and not to sacrifice his catechism to his poetry. In order to it, I do expect of him in the first place, to make his own poem, without depending upon Phoebus for any part of it, or calling out for aid upon any one of the muses by name. I do likewise positively forbid the sending of Mercury with any particular message or dispatch relating to the peace, and shall by no means suffer Minerva to take upon her the shape of any plenipotentiary concerned in this great work. I do further declare, that I shall not allow the Destinies to have had an hand in the deaths of the several thousands who have been slain in the late war, being of opinion that all such deaths may be very well accounted for by the Christian system of powder and ball. I do therefore strictly forbid the Fates to cut the thread of man's life upon any pretence whatsoever, unless it be for the sake of the rhyme. And whereas I have good reason to fear, that Neptune will have a great deal of business on his hands, in several poems which we may now

suppose are upon the anvil, I do also prohibit his appearance, unless it be done in metaphor, simile, or any very short allusion, and that even here he be not permitted to enter, but with great caution and circumspection. I desire that the same rule may be extended to his whole fraternity of heathen gods, it being my design to condemn every poem to the flames in which Jupiter thunders, or exercises any other act of authority which does not belong to him: in short, I expect that no pagan agent shall be introduced, or any fact related which a man cannot give credit to with a good conscience. Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to several of the female poets in this nation, who shall be still left in full possession of their gods and goddesses, in the same manner as if this paper had never been written."

The Spectator, No. 523. Thursday, October 30, 1712.

CXXXVI

Precedence among the Learned

Singula quaeque locum teneant sortita decenter.—HOR.

UPON the hearing of several late disputes concerning rank and precedence, I could not forbear amusing myself with some observations, which I have made upon the learned world as to this great particular. By the learned world I here mean at large, all those who are any way concerned in works of literature, whether in

the writing, printing, or repeating part. To begin with the writers; I have observed that the author of a folio, in all companies and conversations, sets himself above the author of a quarto; the author of a quarto above the author of an octavo; and so on, by a gradual descent and subordination, to an author in twenty-fours. This distinction is so well observed, that in an assembly of the learned I have seen a folio writer place himself in an elbow-chair, when the author of duodecimo has, out of a just deference to his superior quality, seated himself upon a squab. In a word, authors are usually ranged in company after the same manner as their works are upon a shelf.

The most minute pocket-author hath beneath him the writers of all pamphlets, or works that are only stitched. As for a pamphleteer, he takes place of none but of the authors of single sheets, and of that fraternity who publish their labours on certain days, or on every day of the week. I do not find that the precedency among the individuals in this latter class of writers is yet settled.

For my own part, I have had so strict a regard to the ceremonial which prevails in the learned world, that I never presumed to take place of a pamphleteer till my daily papers were gathered into those two first volumes, which have already appeared. After which, I naturally jumped over the heads not only of all pamphleteers, but of every octavo writer in Great Britain, that had written but one book. I am also informed by my bookseller, that six octavos have at

all times been looked upon as an equivalent to a folio, which I take notice of the rather, because I would not have the learned world surprised, if after the publication of half a dozen volumes I take my place accordingly. When my scattered forces are thus rallied, and reduced into regular bodies, I flatter myself that I shall make no despicable figure at the head of them.

Whether these rules, which have been received time out of mind in the commonwealth of letters, were not originally established with an eye to our paper manufacture, I shall leave to the discussion of others, and shall only remark further in this place, that all printers and booksellers take the wall of one another, according to the above-mentioned merits of the authors to whom they respectively belong.

I come now to that point of precedency which is settled among the three learned professions by the wisdom of our laws. I need not here take notice of the rank which is allotted to every doctor in each of these professions, who are all of them, though not so high as knights, yet a degree above squires; this last order of men, being the illiterate body of the nation, are consequently thrown together into a class below the three learned professions. I mention this for the sake of several rural squires, whose reading does not rise so high as to *The present state of England*, and who are often apt to usurp that precedency which by the laws of their country is not due to them. Their want of learning, which has planted them in this station, may in some measure extenuate their misdemeanour; and

our professors ought to pardon them when they offend in this particular, considering that they are in a state of ignorance, or, as we usually say, do not know their right hand from their left.

There is another kind of persons who are retainers to the learned world, and who regulate themselves upon all occasions by several laws peculiar to their body. I mean the players or actors of both sexes. Among these it is a standing and uncontroverted principle, that a tragedian always takes place of a comedian; and 'tis very well known the merry drolls who make us laugh are always placed at the lower end of the table, and in every entertainment give way to the dignity of the buskin. It is a stage maxim, "Once a king, and always a king." For this reason it would be thought very absurd in Mr. Bullock,[1] notwithstanding the height and gracefulness of his person, to sit at the right hand of a hero, though he were but five foot high. The same distinction is observed among the ladies of the theatre. Queens and heroines preserve their rank in private conversation, while those who are waiting-women and maids of honour upon the stage, keep their distance also behind the scenes.

[1] William Bullock, a comic actor, born about 1657. His talents are thus compared by Steele in *The Tatler* (No. 188) to those of his rival Penkethman: "Mr. Bullock has the more agreeable squall, and Mr. Penkethman the more graceful shrug. Penkethman devours a cold chick with great applause; Bullock's talent lies chiefly in asparagus. Penkethman is very dexterous at conveying himself under a table; Bullock is no less active at jumping over a stick. Mr. Penkethman has a great deal of money; but Mr. Bullock is the taller man."

I shall only add, that by a parity of reason all writers of tragedy look upon it as their due to be seated, served, or saluted before comic writers, those who deal in tragi-comedy usually taking their seats between the authors of either side. There has been a long dispute for precedency between the tragic and heroic poets. Aristotle would have the latter yield the *pas* to the former, but Mr. Dryden and many others would never submit to this decision. Burlesque writers pay the same deference to the heroic, as comic writers to their serious brothers in the drama.

By this short table of laws, order is kept up, and distinction preserved in the whole republic of letters.

The Spectator, No. 529. Thursday, November 6, 1712.

CXXXVII

Will Honeycomb's Marriage

Sic visum Veneri; cui placet impares
Formas atque animos sub juga aenea
Saevo mittere cum joco. HOR.

IT is very usual for those who have been severe upon marriage, in some part or other of their lives to enter into the fraternity which they have ridiculed, and to see their raillery return upon their own heads. I scarce ever knew a woman-hater that did not, sooner or later, pay for it. Marriage, which is a blessing to another man, falls upon such an one as a judgment. Mr. Congreve's *Old Bachelor* is set forth to us with much

wit and humour as an example of this kind. In short, those who have most distinguished themselves by railing at the sex in general, very often make an honourable amends, by choosing one of the most worthless persons of it for a companion and yoke-fellow. Hymen takes his revenge in kind, on those who turn his mysteries into ridicule.

My friend Will Honeycomb, who was so unmercifully witty upon the women, in a couple of letters, which I lately communicated to the public, has given the ladies ample satisfaction by marrying a farmer's daughter; a piece of news which came to our club by the last post. The Templar is very positive that he has married a dairy-maid: but Will, in his letter to me on this occasion, sets the best face upon the matter that he can, and gives a more tolerable account of his spouse. I must confess I suspected something more than ordinary, when upon opening the letter I found that Will was fallen off from his former gaiety, having changed Dear Spec, which was his usual salute at the beginning of the letter, into *My worthy Friend*, and subscribed himself in the latter end of it at full length William Honeycomb. In short, the gay, the loud, the vain Will Honeycomb, who had made love to every great fortune that has appeared in town for above thirty years together, and boasted of favours from ladies whom he had never seen, is at length wedded to a plain country girl.

His letter gives us the picture of a converted rake. The sober character of the husband is dashed with the

man of the town, and enlivened with those little cant phrases which have made my friend Will often thought very pretty company. But let us hear what he says for himself.

"MY WORTHY FRIEND—I question not but you, and the rest of my acquaintance, wonder that I, who have lived in the smoke and gallantries of the town for thirty years together, should all on a sudden grow fond of a country life. Had not my dog of a steward run away as he did, without making up his accounts, I had still been immersed in sin and sea-coal. But since my late forced visit to my estate, I am so pleased with it, that I am resolved to live and die upon it. I am every day abroad among my acres, and can scarce forbear filling my letter with breezes, shades, flowers, meadows, and purling streams. The simplicity of manners, which I have heard you so often speak of, and which appears here in perfection, charms me wonderfully. As an instance of it, I must acquaint you, and by your means the whole club, that I have lately married one of my tenant's daughters. She is born of honest parents, and though she has no portion, she has a great deal of virtue. The natural sweetness and innocence of her behaviour, the freshness of her complexion, the unaffected turn of her shape and person, shot me through and through every time I saw her, and did more execution upon me in grogram, than the greatest beauty in town or court had ever done in brocade. In short, she is such an one as promises me a good heir to my

estate; and if by her means I cannot leave to my children what are falsely called the gifts of birth, high titles and alliances, I hope to convey to them the more real and valuable gifts of birth, strong bodies and healthy constitutions. As for your fine women, I need not tell thee that I know them. I have had my share in their graces, but no more of that. It shall be my business hereafter to live the life of an honest man, and to act as becomes the master of a family. I question not but I shall draw upon me the raillery of the town, and be treated to the tune of *The marriage-hater matched*; but I am prepared for it. I have been as witty upon others in my time. To tell thee truly, I saw such a tribe of fashionable young fluttering coxcombs shot up, that I did not think my post of an *homme de ruelle* any longer tenable. I felt a certain stiffness in my limbs, which entirely destroyed that jauntiness of air I was once master of. Besides, for I may now confess my age to thee, I have been eight and forty above these twelve years. Since my retirement into the country will make a vacancy in the club, I could wish you would fill up my place with my friend Tom Dapperwit. He has an infinite deal of fire, and knows the town. For my own part, as I have said before, I shall endeavour to live hereafter suitable to a man in my station, as a prudent head of a family, a good husband, a careful father (when it shall so happen), and as your most sincere friend and humble servant,

"WILLIAM HONEYCOMB."

The Spectator, No. 530. Friday, November 7, 1712.

CXXXVIII

Danglers after Women

O vere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges!— VIRG.

As I was the other day standing in my bookseller's shop, a pretty young thing about eighteen years of age, stept out of her coach, and brushing by me beckoned the man of the shop to the further end of his counter, where she whispered something to him with an attentive look, and at the same time presented him with a letter: after which, pressing the end of her fan upon his hand, she delivered the remaining part of her message, and withdrew. I observed, in the midst of her discourse, that she flushed, and cast an eye upon me over her shoulder, having been informed by my bookseller that I was the man of the short face whom she had so often read of. Upon her passing by me, the pretty blooming creature smiled in my face, and dropped me a curtsey. She scarce gave me time to return her salute, before she quitted the shop with an easy scuttle, and stepped again into her coach, giving the footman directions to drive where they were bid. Upon her departure my bookseller gave me a letter superscribed, "To the ingenious Spectator," which the young lady had desired him to deliver into my own hands, and to tell me that the speedy publication of it would not only oblige herself, but a whole tea-table of my friends. I opened it therefore, with a resolution to publish it,

whatever it should contain, and am sure, if any of my male readers will be so severely critical as not to like it, they would have been as well pleased with it as myself, had they seen the face of the pretty scribe.

"*London, Nov.* 1712.

"MR. SPECTATOR—You are always ready to receive any useful hint or proposal, and such, I believe, you will think one that may put you in a way to employ the most idle part of the kingdom; I mean that part of mankind who are known by the name of the women's-men, or beaus, etc. MR. SPECTATOR, you are sensible these pretty gentlemen are not made for any manly employments, and for want of business are often as much in the vapours as the ladies. Now what I propose is this, since knotting is again in fashion, which has been found a very pretty amusement, that you would recommend it to these gentlemen as something that may make them useful to the ladies they admire. And since 'tis not inconsistent with any game or other diversion, for it may be done in the play-house, in their coaches, at the tea-table, and, in short, in all places where they come for the sake of the ladies (except at church, be pleased to forbid it there to prevent mistakes), it will be easily complied with. 'Tis beside an employment that allows, as we see by the fair sex, of many graces, which will make the beaus more readily come into it; it shows a white hand and diamond ring to great advantage; it leaves the eyes at full liberty to be employed as before, as also the thoughts,

and the tongue. In short, it seems in every respect so proper, that 'tis needless to urge it further, by speaking of the satisfaction these male-knotters will find, when they see their work mixed up in a fringe, and worn by the fair lady for whom and with whom it was done. Truly, MR. SPECTATOR, I cannot but be pleased I have hit upon something that these gentlemen are capable of; for 'tis sad so considerable a part of the kingdom (I mean for numbers) should be of no manner of use. I shall not trouble you farther at this time, but only to say, that I am always your reader, and generally your admirer, C. B.

"*P.S.*—The sooner these fine gentlemen are set to work the better, there being at this time several fine fringes that stay only for more hands."

I shall, in the next place, present my reader with the description of a set of men who are common enough in the world, though I do not remember that I have yet taken notice of them, as they are drawn in the following letter.

"MR. SPECTATOR—Since you have lately, to so good purpose, enlarged upon conjugal love, it's to be hoped you'll discourage every practice that rather proceeds from a regard to interest than to happiness. Now you cannot but observe, that most of our fine young ladies readily fall in with the direction of the graver sort, to retain in their service, by some small encouragement, as great a number as they can of

supernumerary and insignificant fellows, which they use like whifflers, and commonly call *Shoeing-horns*. These are never designed to know the length of the foot, but only, when a good offer comes, to whet and spur him up to the point. Nay, 'tis the opinion of that grave lady, Madam Matchwell, that it's absolutely convenient for every prudent family to have several of these implements about the house, to clap on as occasion serves, and that every spark ought to produce a certificate of his being a shoeing-horn, before he be admitted as a shoe. A certain lady, whom I could name, if it was necessary, has at present more shoeing-horns of all sizes, countries, and colours, in her service than ever she had new shoes in her life. I have known a woman make use of a shoeing-horn for several years, and finding him unsuccessful in that function, convert him at length into a shoe. I am mistaken if your friend Mr. William Honeycomb was not a cast shoeing-horn before his late marriage. As for myself, I must frankly declare to you, that I have been an arrant shoeing-horn for above these twenty years. I served my first mistress in that capacity above five of the number, before she was shod. I confess, though she had many who made their applications to her, I always thought myself the best shoe in her shop, and it was not till a month before her marriage that I discovered what I was. This had like to have broke my heart, and raised such suspicions in me, that I told the next I made love to, upon receiving some unkind usage from her, that I began to look upon myself as no more

than her shoeing-horn. Upon which, my dear, who was a coquette in her nature, told me I was hypochondriacal, and that I might as well look upon myself to be an egg or a pipkin. But in a very short time after she gave me to know that I was not mistaken in myself. It would be tedious to recount to you the life of an unfortunate shoeing-horn, or I might entertain you with a very long and melancholy relation of my sufferings. Upon the whole, I think, sir, it would very well become a man in your post, to determine in what cases a woman may be allowed, with honour, to make use of a shoeing-horn, as also to declare whether a maid on this side five and twenty, or a widow who has not been three years in that state, may be granted such a privilege, with other difficulties which will naturally occur to you upon that subject.—I am, sir, with the most profound veneration, yours, etc."

The Spectator, No. 536. Friday, November 14, 1712.

CXXXIX

The Censors of the Spectator

Et sibi praeferri se gaudet—OVID.

WHEN I have been present in assemblies where my paper has been talked of, I have been very well pleased to hear those who would detract from the author of it observe, that the letters which are sent to the Spectator are as good, if not better than any of his works. Upon

this occasion many letters of mirth are usually mentioned, which some think the Spectator writ to himself, and which others commend because they fancy he received them from his correspondents: such are those from the Valetudinarian; the Inspector of the Sign-posts; the Master of the Fan-exercise; with that of the Hooped-petticoat; that of Nicholas Hart, the Annual Sleeper; that of Sir John Envill; that upon the London Cries; with multitudes of the same nature. As I love nothing more than to mortify the ill-natured, that I may do it effectually, I must acquaint them, they have very often praised me when they did not design it, and that they have approved my writings when they thought they had derogated from them. I have heard several of these unhappy gentlemen proving, by undeniable arguments, that I was not able to pen a letter which I had written the day before. Nay, I have heard some of them throwing out ambiguous expressions, and giving the company reason to suspect that they themselves did me the honour to send me such and such a particular epistle, which happened to be talked of with the esteem or approbation of those who were present. These rigid critics are so afraid of allowing me anything which does not belong to me, that they will not be positive whether the lion, the wild boar, and the flower-pots in the play-house, did not actually write those letters which came to me in their names. I must therefore inform these gentlemen, that I often choose this way of casting my thoughts into a letter, for the following reasons: first, out of the

policy of those who try their jest upon another, before they own it themselves. Secondly, because I would extort a little praise from such who will never applaud anything whose author is known and certain. Thirdly, because it gave me an opportunity of introducing a great variety of characters into my work, which could not have been done, had I always written in the person of the Spectator. Fourthly, because the dignity Spectatorial would have suffered, had I published as from myself those several ludicrous compositions which I have ascribed to fictitious names and characters. And lastly, because they often serve to bring in more naturally such additional reflections as have been placed at the end of them.

There are others who have likewise done me a very particular honour, though undesignedly. These are such who will needs have it, that I have translated or borrowed many of my thoughts out of books which are written in other languages. I have heard of a person, who is more famous for his library than his learning, that has asserted this more than once in his private conversation. Were it true, I am sure he could not speak it from his own knowledge; but had he read the books which he has collected, he would find this accusation to be wholly groundless. Those who are truly learned will acquit me in this point, in which I have been so far from offending, that I have been scrupulous perhaps to a fault in quoting the authors of several passages which I might have made my own. But as this assertion is in reality an encomium on what

I have published, I ought rather to glory in it, than endeavour to confute it.

Some are so very willing to alienate from me that small reputation which might accrue to me from any of these my speculations, that they attribute some of the best of them to those imaginary manuscripts with which I have introduced them. There are others, I must confess, whose objections have given me a greater concern, as they seem to reflect, under this head, rather on my morality than on my invention. These are they who say an author is guilty of falsehood, when he talks to the public of manuscripts which he never saw, or describes scenes of action or discourse in which he was never engaged. But these gentlemen would do well to consider, there is not a fable or parable which ever was made use of, that is not liable to this exception; since nothing, according to this notion, can be related innocently, which was not once matter of fact. Besides, I think the most ordinary reader may be able to discover, by my way of writing, what I deliver in these occurrences as truth, and what as fiction.

Since I am unawares engaged in answering the several objections which have been made against these my works, I must take notice that there are some who affirm a paper of this nature should always turn upon diverting subjects, and others who find fault with every one of them that hath not an immediate tendency to the advancement of religion or learning. I shall leave these gentlemen to dispute it out among themselves, since I see one half of my conduct patron-

ized by each side. Were I serious on an improper subject, or trifling in a serious one, I should deservedly draw upon me the censure of my readers; or were I conscious of anything in my writings that is not innocent at least, or that the greatest part of them were not sincerely designed to discountenance vice and ignorance, and support the interest of true wisdom and virtue, I should be more severe upon myself than the public is disposed to be. In the meanwhile I desire my reader to consider every particular paper or discourse as a distinct tract by itself, and independent of everything that goes before or after it.

I shall end this paper with the following letter, which was really sent me, as some others have been which I have published, and for which I must own myself indebted to their respective writers.

"SIR—I was this morning in a company of your well-wishers, when we read over, with great satisfaction, Tully's observations on action adapted to the British theatre: though, by the way, we were very sorry to find that you have disposed of another member of your club. Poor Sir Roger is dead, and the worthy clergyman dying. Captain Sentry has taken possession of a fair estate; Will Honeycomb has married a farmer's daughter; and the Templar withdraws himself into the business of his own profession. What will all this end in? We are afraid it portends no good to the public. Unless you very speedily fix a day for the election of new members, we are under apprehensions of losing the

British Spectator. I hear of a party of ladies who intend to address you on the subject, and question not, if you do not give us the slip very suddenly, that you will receive addresses from all parts of the kingdom to continue so useful a work. Pray deliver us out of this perplexity, and among the multitude of your readers you will particularly oblige your most sincere friend and servant, PHILO-SPEC."

The Spectator, No. 542. Friday, November 21, 1712.

CXL

The Retirement of Sir Andrew Freeport

Quamvis digressu veteris confusus amici,
Laudo tamen— JUV.

I BELIEVE most people begin the world with a resolution to withdraw from it into a serious kind of solitude or retirement, when they have made themselves easy in it. Our unhappiness is, that we find out some excuse or other for deferring such our good resolutions till our intended retreat is cut off by death. But among all kinds of people there are none who are so hard to part with the world, as those who are grown old in the heaping up of riches. Their minds are so warped with their constant attention to gain, that it is very difficult for them to give their souls another bent, and convert them towards those objects, which, though they are proper for every stage of life, are so more especially for the last. Horace describes an old usurer as so charmed

with the pleasures of a country life, that in order to make a purchase he called in all his money; but what was the event of it? why, in a very few days after he put it out again. I am engaged in this series of thought by a discourse which I had last week with my worthy friend Sir Andrew Freeport, a man of so much natural eloquence, good sense, and probity of mind, that I always hear him with a particular pleasure. As we were sitting together, being the sole remaining members of our club, Sir Andrew gave me an account of the many busy scenes of life in which he had been engaged, and at the same time reckoned up to me abundance of those lucky hits, which at another time he would have called pieces of good fortune; but in the temper of mind he was then, he termed them mercies, favours of Providence, and blessings upon an honest industry. "Now," says he, "you must know, my good friend, I am so used to consider myself as creditor and debtor, that I often state my accounts after the same manner with regard to heaven and my own soul. In this case, when I look upon the debtor side, I find such innumerable articles, that I want arithmetic to cast them up; but when I look upon the creditor side, I find little more than blank paper. Now, though I am very well satisfied that it is not in my power to balance accounts with my Maker, I am resolved however to turn all my future endeavours that way. You must not therefore be surprised, my friend, if you hear that I am betaking myself to a more thoughtful kind of life, and if I meet you no more in this place."

I could not but approve so good a resolution, notwithstanding the loss I shall suffer by it. Sir Andrew has since explained himself to me more at large in the following letter, which is just come to my hands.

"GOOD MR. SPECTATOR—Notwithstanding my friends at the club have always rallied me, when I have talked of retiring from business, and repeated to me one of my own sayings, 'That a merchant has never enough till he has got a little more'; I can now inform you, that there is one in the world who thinks he has enough, and is determined to pass the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of what he has. You know me so well, that I need not tell you I mean, by the enjoyment of my possessions, the making of them useful to the public. As the greatest part of my estate has been hitherto of an unsteady and volatile nature, either tost upon seas or fluctuating in funds, it is now fixed and settled in substantial acres and tenements. I have removed it from the uncertainty of stocks, winds, and waves, and disposed of it in a considerable purchase. This will give me great opportunity of being charitable in my way, that is, in setting my poor neighbours to work, and giving them a comfortable subsistence out of their own industry. My gardens, my fish-ponds, my arable and pasture grounds shall be my several hospitals, or rather workhouses, in which I propose to maintain a great many indigent persons, who are now starving in my neighbourhood. I have got a fine spread of improveable lands, and in my own thoughts

am already ploughing up some of them, fencing others, planting woods, and draining marshes. In fine, as I have my share in the surface of this island, I am resolved to make it as beautiful a spot as any in her Majesty's dominions; at least there is not an inch of it which shall not be cultivated to the best advantage, and do its utmost for its owner. As in my mercantile employment I so disposed of my affairs, that from whatever corner of the compass the wind blew, it was bringing home one or other of my ships; I hope, as a husbandman, to contrive it so, that not a shower of rain or a glimpse of sunshine shall fall upon my estate without bettering some part of it, and contributing to the products of the season. You know it has been hitherto my opinion of life, that it is thrown away when it is not some way useful to others. But when I am riding out by myself, in the fresh air on the open heath that lies by my house, I find several other thoughts growing up in me. I am now of opinion, that a man of my age may find business enough on himself, by setting his mind in order, preparing it for another world, and reconciling it to the thoughts of death. I must therefore acquaint you, that besides those usual methods of charity of which I have before spoken, I am at this very instant finding out a convenient place where I may build an almshouse, which I intend to endow very handsomely, for a dozen superannuated husbandmen. It will be a great pleasure to me to say my prayers twice a day with men of my own years, who all of them, as well as myself, may have their thoughts

taken up how they shall die, rather than how they shall live. I remember an excellent saying that I learned at school, *finis coronat opus*. You know best whether it be in Virgil or in Horace, it is my business to apply it. If your affairs will permit you to take the country air with me sometimes, you shall find an apartment fitted up for you, and shall be every day entertained with beef or mutton of my own feeding, fish out of my own ponds, and fruit out of my own gardens. You shall have free egress and regress about my house, without having any questions asked you, and, in a word, such an hearty welcome as you may expect from your most sincere friend and humble servant, ANDREW FREEPORT."

The club, of which I am a member, being entirely dispersed, I shall consult my reader next week upon a project relating to the institution of a new one.

The Spectator, No. 549. Saturday, November 29, 1712.

CXLI

The Spectator turned Tatler

Qualis ubi in lucem coluber, mala gramina pastus,
Frigida sub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat;
Nunc positis novus exuviis, nitidusque juventa,
Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga
Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trisulcis.—VIRG.

UPON laying down the office of SPECTATOR, I acquainted the world with my design of electing a new club, and of opening my mouth in it after a most solemn manner.

Both the election and the ceremony are now past; but not finding it so easy as I at first imagined, to break through a fifty years' silence, I would not venture into the world under the character of a man who pretends to talk like other people, till I had arrived at a full freedom of speech.

I shall reserve for another time the history of such club or clubs of which I am now a talkative, but unworthy member; and shall here give an account of this surprising change which has been produced in me, and which I look upon to be as remarkable an accident as any recorded in history, since that which happened to the son of Croesus, after having been many years as much tongue-tied as myself.

Upon the first opening of my mouth, I made a speech consisting of about half a dozen well-turned periods; but grew so very hoarse upon it, that for three days together, instead of finding the use of my tongue, I was afraid that I had quite lost it. Besides, the unusual extension of my muscles on this occasion made my face ache on both sides to such a degree, that nothing but an invincible resolution and perseverance could have prevented me from falling back to my monosyllables.

I afterwards made several essays towards speaking; and that I might not be startled at my own voice, which has happened to me more than once, I used to read aloud in my chamber, and have often stood in the middle of the street to call a coach, when I knew there was none within hearing.

When I was thus grown pretty well acquainted with my own voice, I laid hold of all opportunities to exert it. Not caring however to speak much by myself, and to draw upon me the whole attention of those I conversed with, I used, for some time, to walk every morning in the Mall, and talk in chorus with a parcel of Frenchmen. I found my modesty greatly relieved by the communicative temper of this nation, who are so very sociable, as to think they are never better company, than when they are all opening at the same time.

I then fancied I might receive great benefit from female conversation, and that I should have a convenience of talking with the greater freedom, when I was not under any impediment of thinking: I therefore threw myself into an assembly of ladies, but could not for my life get in a word among them; and found that if I did not change my company, I was in danger of being reduced to my primitive taciturnity.

The coffee-houses have ever since been my chief places of resort, where I have made the greatest improvements; in order to which I have taken a particular care never to be of the same opinion with the man I conversed with. I was a Tory at Button's, and a Whig at Child's; a friend to the *Englishman*, or an advocate for the *Examiner*, as it best served my turn: some fancy me a great enemy to the French king, though, in reality, I only make use of him for a help to discourse. In short, I wrangle and dispute for exercise; and have carried this point so far, that I was

once like to have been run through the body for making a little too free with my betters.

In a word, I am quite another man to what I was.

—Nil fuit unquam
Tam dispar sibi—

My old acquaintance scarce know me; nay, I was asked the other day by a Jew at Jonathan's, whether I was not related to a dumb gentleman, who used to come to that coffee-house? But I think I never was better pleased in my life than about a week ago, when, as I was battling it across the table with a young Templar, his companion gave him a pull by the sleeve, begging him to come away, for that the old prig would talk him to death.

Being now a very good proficient in discourse, I shall appear in the world with this addition to my character, that my countrymen may reap the fruits of my new-acquired loquacity.

Those who have been present at public disputes in the university, know that it is usual to maintain heresies for argument's sake. I have heard a man a most impudent Socinian for half an hour, who has been an orthodox divine all his life after. I have taken the same method to accomplish myself in the gift of utterance, having talked above a twelvemonth, not so much for the benefit of my hearers as of myself. But since I have now gained the faculty I have been so long endeavouring after, I intend to make a right use of it, and shall think myself obliged, for the future, to

speak always in truth and sincerity of heart. While a man is learning to fence, he practises both on friend and foe; but when he is a master in the art, he never exerts it but on what he thinks the right side.

That this last allusion may not give my reader a wrong idea of my design in this paper, I must here inform him, that the author of it is of no faction, that he is a friend to no interests but those of truth and virtue, nor a foe to any but those of vice and folly. Though I make more noise in the world than I used to do, I am still resolved to act in it as an indifferent Spectator. It is not my ambition to increase the number either of Whigs or Tories, but of wise and good men, and I could heartily wish there were not faults common to both parties, which afford me sufficient matter to work upon, without descending to those which are peculiar to either.

If in a multitude of counsellors there is safety, we ought to think ourselves the securest nation in the world. Most of our garrets are inhabited by statesmen, who watch over the liberties of their country, and make a shift to keep themselves from starving by taking into their care the properties of all their fellow-subjects.

As these politicians of both sides have already worked the nation into a most unnatural ferment, I shall be so far from endeavouring to raise it to a greater height, that, on the contrary, it shall be the chief tendency of my papers to inspire my countrymen with a mutual goodwill and benevolence. Whatever faults either party may be guilty of, they are rather inflamed

than cured by those reproaches which they cast upon one another. The most likely method of rectifying any man's conduct, is, by recommending to him the principles of truth and honour, religion and virtue; and so long as he acts with an eye to these principles, whatever party he is of, he cannot fail of being a good Englishman and a lover of his country.

As for the persons concerned in this work, the names of all of them, or at least of such as desire it, shall be published hereafter: till which time I must entreat the courteous reader to suspend his curiosity, and rather to consider what is written, than who they are that write it.

Having thus adjusted all necessary preliminaries with my reader, I shall not trouble him with any more prefatory discourses, but proceed in my old method, and entertain him with speculations on every useful subject that falls in my way.

The Spectator, No. 556. Friday, June 18, 1714.

CXLII

Plain Speaking

Quippe domum timet ambiguam, Tyriosque bilingues.
VIRG.

"THERE is nothing," says Plato, "so delightful as the hearing or the speaking of truth." For this reason there is no conversation so agreeable as that of the man of integrity, who hears without any intention to betray, and speaks without any intention to deceive.

Among all the accounts which are given of Cato, I do not remember one that more redounds to his honour than the following passage related by Plutarch. As an advocate was pleading the cause of his client before one of the praetors, he could only produce a single witness in a point where the law required the testimony of two persons; upon which the advocate insisted on the integrity of that person whom he had produced; but the praetor told him, that where the law required two witnesses he would not accept of one, though it were Cato himself. Such a speech, from a person who sat at the head of a court of justice while Cato was still living, shows us, more than a thousand examples, the high reputation this great man had gained among his contemporaries upon the account of his sincerity.

When such an inflexible integrity is a little softened and qualified by the rules of conversation and good-breeding, there is not a more shining virtue in the whole catalogue of social duties. A man however ought to take great care not to polish himself out of his veracity, nor to refine his behaviour to the prejudice of his virtue.

This subject is exquisitely treated in the most elegant sermon of the great British preacher.[1] I shall beg leave to transcribe out of it two or three sentences, as a proper introduction to a very curious letter, which I shall make the chief entertainment of this speculation.

"The old English plainness and sincerity, that generous integrity of nature, and honesty of disposition,

[1] "Tillotson. The sermon *Of Sincerity towards God and Man*."—H. MORLEY.

which always argues true greatness of mind, and is usually accompanied with undaunted courage and resolution, is in a great measure lost among us.

"The dialect of conversation is nowadays so swelled with vanity and compliment, and so surfeited (as I may say) of expressions of kindness and respect, that if a man that lived an age or two ago should return into the world again, he would really want a dictionary to help him to understand his own language, and to know the true intrinsic value of the phrase in fashion; and would hardly, at first, believe at what a low rate the highest strains and expressions of kindness imaginable do commonly pass in current payment; and when he should come to understand it, it would be a great while before he could bring himself, with a good countenance and a good conscience, to converse with men upon equal terms and in their own way."

I have by me a letter which I look upon as a great curiosity, and which may serve as an exemplification to the foregoing passage, cited out of this most excellent prelate. It is said to have been written in King Charles the Second's reign by the ambassador of Bantam, a little after his arrival in England.

"MASTER—The people where I now am, have tongues further from their hearts than from London to Bantam, and thou knowest the inhabitants of one of these places do not know what is done in the other. They call thee and thy subjects barbarians, because we speak what we mean; and account themselves a

civilized people, because they speak one thing and mean another: truth they call barbarity, and falsehood politeness. Upon my first landing, one who was sent from the king of this place to meet me, told me, 'That he was extremely sorry for the storm I had met with just before my arrival.' I was troubled to hear him grieve and afflict himself upon my account; but in less than a quarter of an hour he smiled, and was as merry as if nothing had happened. Another who came with him told me by my interpreter, 'He should be glad to do me any service that lay in his power.' Upon which I desired him to carry one of my portmanteaus for me; but instead of serving me according to his promise, he laughed, and bid another do it. I lodged the first week at the house of one who desired me 'to think myself at home, and to consider his house as my own.' Accordingly, I the next morning began to knock down one of the walls of it, in order to let in the fresh air, and had packed up some of the household goods, of which I intended to have made thee a present; but the false varlet no sooner saw me falling to work, but he sent word to desire me to give over, for that he would have no such doings in his house. I had not been long in this nation, before I was told by one, for whom I had asked a certain favour from the chief of the king's servants, whom they here call the lord-treasurer, that I had 'eternally obliged him.' I was so surprised at his gratitude that I could not forbear saying, 'What service is there which one man can do for another, that can oblige him to all eternity!' However, I only

asked him for my reward, that he would lend me his eldest daughter during my stay in this country; but I quickly found that he was as treacherous as the rest of his countrymen.

"At my first going to court, one of the great men almost put me out of countenance by asking 'ten thousand pardons' of me for only treading by accident upon my toe. They call this kind of lie a compliment; for when they are civil to a great man, they tell him untruths, for which thou wouldest order any of thy officers of state to receive a hundred blows upon his foot. I do not know how I shall negotiate anything with this people, since there is so little credit to be given to them. When I go to see the king's scribe, I am generally told that he is not at home, though perhaps I saw him go into his house almost the very moment before. Thou wouldest fancy that the whole nation are physicians, for the first question they always ask me is, 'How I do'. I have this question put to me above a hundred times a day. Nay, they are not only thus inquisitive after my health, but wish it in a more solemn manner, with a full glass in their hands, every time I sit with them at table, though at the same time they would persuade me to drink their liquors in such quantities as I have found by experience will make me sick. They often pretend to pray for thy health also in the same manner; but I have more reason to expect it from the goodness of thy constitution, than the sincerity of their wishes. May thy slave escape in safety from

this double-tongued race of men, and live to lay himself once more at thy feet in thy royal city of Bantam."

The Spectator, No. 557. Monday, June 21, 1714.

CXLIII

The Heap of Sorrows

Qui fit, Maecenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem
Seu ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illa
Contentus vivat, laudet diversa sequentes?
"O fortunati mercatores!" gravis annis
Miles ait, multo jam fractus membra labore.
Contra mercator, navim jactantibus Austris,
"Militia est potior. Quid enim? concurritur: horae
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria laeta."
Agricolam laudat juris legumque peritus,
Sub galli cantum consultor ubi ostia pulsat.
Ille, datis vadibus, qui rure extractus in urbem est,
Solos felices viventes clamat in urbe.
Caetera de genere hoc (adeo sunt multa) loquacem
Delassare valent Fabium. Ne te morer, audi
Quo rem deducam. Si quis deus, "En ego," dicat,
Jam faciam quod vultis: eris tu, qui modo miles,
Mercator: tu consultus modo, rusticus. Hinc vos,
Vos hinc mutatis discedite partibus. Eja,
Quid statis?" Nolint. Atqui licet esse beatis.—HOR.

IT is a celebrated thought of Socrates, that if all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a public stock, in order to be equally distributed among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy, would prefer the share they are already possessed of, before that which would fall to them by such a division. Horace has carried this thought a

great deal further in the motto of my paper, which implies that the hardships or misfortunes we lie under, are more easy to us than those of any other person would be, in case we could change conditions with him.

As I was ruminating on these two remarks, and seated in my elbow-chair, I insensibly fell asleep ; when, on a sudden, methought there was a proclamation made by Jupiter, that every mortal should bring in his griefs and calamities, and throw them together in a heap. There was a large plain appointed for this purpose. I took my stand in the centre of it, and saw with a great deal of pleasure the whole human species marching one after another, and throwing down their several loads, which immediately grew up into a prodigious mountain, that seemed to rise above the clouds.

There was a certain lady of a thin airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity. She carried a magnifying glass in one of her hands, and was clothed in a loose flowing robe, embroidered with several figures of fiends and spectres, that discovered themselves in a thousand chimerical shapes, as her garment hovered in the wind. There was something wild and distracted in her looks. Her name was FANCY. She led up every mortal to the appointed place, after having very officiously assisted him in making up his pack, and laying it upon his shoulders. My heart melted within me to see my fellow-creatures groaning under their respective burdens, and to consider that prodigious bulk of human calamities which lay before me.

There were however several persons who gave me

great diversion upon this occasion. I observed one bringing in a fardel very carefully concealed under an old embroidered cloak, which, upon his throwing it into the heap, I discovered to be poverty. Another, after a great deal of puffing, threw down his luggage; which, upon examining, I found to be his wife.

There were multitudes of lovers saddled with very whimsical burdens composed of darts and flames; but, what was very odd, though they sighed as if their hearts would break under these bundles of calamities, they could not persuade themselves to cast them into the heap, when they came up to it; but after a few faint efforts, shook their heads and marched away, as heavy loaden as they came. I saw multitudes of old women throw down their wrinkles, and several young ones who stripped themselves of a tawny skin. There were very great heaps of red noses, large lips, and rusty teeth. The truth of it is, I was surprised to see the greatest part of the mountain made up of bodily deformities. Observing one advancing towards the heap with a larger cargo than ordinary upon his back, I found upon his near approach, that it was only a natural hump, which he disposed of, with great joy of heart, among this collection of human miseries. There were likewise distempers of all sorts, though I could not but observe, that there were many more imaginary than real. One little packet I could not but take notice of, which was a complication of all the diseases incident to human nature, and was in the hand of a great many fine people: this was called the spleen.

But what most of all surprised me, was a remark I made, that there was not a single vice or folly thrown into the whole heap: at which I was very much astonished, having concluded within myself, that every one would take this opportunity of getting rid of his passions, prejudices, and frailties.

I took notice in particular of a very profligate fellow, who, I did not question, came loaden with his crimes; but upon searching into his bundle, I found that instead of throwing his guilt from him, he had only laid down his memory. He was followed by another worthless rogue, who flung away his modesty instead of his ignorance.

When the whole race of mankind had thus cast their burdens, the phantom, which had been so busy on this occasion, seeing me an idle spectator of what passed, approached towards me. I grew uneasy at her presence, when of a sudden she held her magnifying glass full before my eyes. I no sooner saw my face in it, but was startled at the shortness of it, which now appeared to me in its utmost aggravation. The immoderate breadth of the features made me very much out of humour with my own countenance, upon which I threw it from me like a mask. It happened very luckily, that one who stood by me had just before thrown down his visage, which, it seems, was too long for him. It was, indeed, extended to a most shameful length; I believe the very chin was, modestly speaking, as long as my whole face. We had both of us an opportunity of mending ourselves, and all the contribu-

tions being now brought in, every man was at liberty to exchange his misfortune for those of another person. But as there arose many new incidents in the sequel of my vision, I shall reserve them for the subject of my next paper.

The Spectator, No. 558. Wednesday, June 23, 1714.

CXLIV

The Heap of Sorrows (concluded)

Quid causae est, merito quin illis Jupiter ambas
Iratus buccas inflet, neque se fore posthac
Tam facilem dicat, votis ut praebeat aurem?—HOR.

IN my last paper, I gave my reader a sight of that mountain of miseries, which was made up of those several calamities that afflict the minds of men. I saw, with unspeakable pleasure, the whole species thus delivered from its sorrows; though, at the same time, as we stood round the heap, and surveyed the several materials of which it was composed, there was scarce a mortal, in this vast multitude, who did not discover what he thought pleasures and blessings of life; and wondered how the owners of them ever came to look upon them as burdens and grievances.

As we were regarding very attentively this confusion of miseries, this chaos of calamity, Jupiter issued out a second proclamation, that every one was now at liberty to exchange his affliction, and to return to his habitation with any such other bundle as should be delivered to him.

Upon this, FANCY began again to bestir herself, and parcelling out the whole heap with incredible activity, recommended to every one his particular packet. The hurry and confusion at this time was not to be expressed. Some observations, which I made upon the occasion, I shall communicate to the public. A venerable grey-headed man, who had laid down the colic, and who I found wanted an heir to his estate, snatched up an undutiful son, that had been thrown into the heap by his angry father. The graceless youth, in less than a quarter of an hour, pulled the old gentleman by the beard, and had like to have knocked his brains out; so that meeting the true father, who came towards him in a fit of the gripes, he begged him to take his son again, and give him back his colic; but they were incapable, either of them, to recede from the choice they had made. A poor galley-slave, who had thrown down his chains, took up the gout in their stead, but made such wry faces, that one might easily perceive he was no great gainer by the bargain. It was pleasant enough to see the several exchanges that were made, for sickness against poverty, hunger against want of appetite, and care against pain.

The female world were very busy among themselves in bartering for features; one was trucking a lock of grey hairs for a carbuncle, another was making over a short waist for a pair of round shoulders, and a third cheapening a bad face for a lost reputation; but on all these occasions, there was not one of them who did not think the new blemish, as soon as she had got it

into her possession, much more disagreeable than the old one. I made the same observation on every other misfortune or calamity, which every one in the assembly brought upon himself, in lieu of what he had parted with; whether it be that all the evils which befall us are in some measure suited and proportioned to our strength, or that every evil becomes more supportable by our being accustomed to it, I shall not determine.

I could not for my heart forbear pitying the poor hump-backed gentleman mentioned in the former paper, who went off a very well-shaped person with a stone in his bladder; nor the fine gentleman who had struck up this bargain with him, that limped through a whole assembly of ladies, who used to admire him, with a pair of shoulders peeping over his head.

I must not omit my own particular adventure. My friend with the long visage had no sooner taken upon him my short face, but he made such a grotesque figure in it, that as I looked upon him I could not forbear laughing at myself, insomuch that I put my own face out of countenance. The poor gentleman was so sensible of the ridicule, that I found he was ashamed of what he had done: on the other side I found that I myself had no great reason to triumph, for as I went to touch my forehead I missed the place, and clapped my finger upon my upper lip. Besides, as my nose was exceeding prominent, I gave it two or three unlucky knocks as I was playing my hand about my face, and aiming at some other part of it. I saw two other gentlemen by me, who were in the same ridiculous

circumstances. These had made a foolish swop between a couple of thick bandy legs, and two long trapsticks that had no calfs to them. One of these looked like a man walking upon stilts, and was so lifted up into the air above his ordinary height, that his head turned round with it, while the other made such awkward circles, as he attempted to walk, that he scarce knew how to move forward upon his new supporters: observing him to be a pleasant kind of fellow, I stuck my cane in the ground, and told him I would lay him a bottle of wine, that he did not march up to it on a line, that I drew for him, in a quarter of an hour.

The heap was at last distributed among the two sexes, who made a most piteous sight, as they wandered up and down under the pressure of their several burdens. The whole plain was filled with murmurs and complaints, groans and lamentations. Jupiter at length, taking compassion on the poor mortals, ordered them a second time to lay down their loads, with a design to give every one his own again. They discharged themselves with a great deal of pleasure, after which the phantom, who had led them into such gross delusions, was commanded to disappear. There was sent in her stead a goddess of a quite different figure: her motions were steady and composed, and her aspect serious but cheerful. She every now and then cast her eyes towards heaven, and fixed them upon Jupiter: her name was PATIENCE. She had no sooner placed herself by the mount of sorrows, but, what I thought

very remarkable, the whole heap sunk to such a degree, that it did not appear a third part so big as it was before. She afterwards returned every man his own proper calamity, and teaching him how to bear it in the most commodious manner, he marched off with it contentedly, being very well pleased that he had not been left to his own choice, as to the kind of evils which fell to his lot.

Besides the several pieces of morality to be drawn out of this vision, I learnt from it, never to repine at my own misfortunes, or to envy the happiness of another, since it is impossible for any man to form a right judgment of his neighbour's sufferings; for which reason also I have determined never to think too lightly of another's complaints, but to regard the sorrows of my fellow creatures with sentiments of humanity and compassion.

The Spectator, No. 559. Friday, June 25, 1714.

CXLV

The Widows' Club

—Paulatim abolere Sichaeum
Incipit, et vivo tentat praevertere amore
Jampridem resides animos desuetaque corda.—VIRG.

"SIR—I am a tall, broad-shouldered, impudent, black fellow, and, as I thought, every way qualified for a rich widow; but after having tried my fortune for above three years together, I have not been able to

get one single relict in the mind. My first attacks were generally successful, but always broke off as soon as they came to the word *Settlement*. Though I have not improved my fortune this way, I have my experience, and have learnt several secrets which may be of use to those unhappy gentlemen, who are commonly distinguished by the name of widow-hunters, and who do not know that this tribe of women are, generally speaking, as much upon the catch as themselves. I shall here communicate to you the mysteries of a certain female cabal of this order, who call themselves 'The Widow club.' This club consists of nine experienced dames, who take their places once a week round a large oval table.

"I. Mrs. President is a person who has disposed of six husbands, and is now determined to take a seventh; being of opinion that there is as much virtue in the touch of a seventh husband as of a seventh son. Her comrades are as follow.

"II. Mrs. Snapp, who has four jointures, by four different bedfellows, of four different shires. She is at present upon the point of marriage with a Middlesex man, and is said to have an ambition of extending her possessions through all the counties in England on this side the Trent.

"III. Mrs. Medlar, who, after two husbands and a gallant, is now wedded to an old gentleman of sixty. Upon her making her report to the club after a week's cohabitation, she is still allowed to sit as a widow, and accordingly takes her place at the board.

" IV. The widow Quick, married within a fortnight after the death of her last husband. Her weeds have served her thrice, and are still as good as new.

" V. Lady Catherine Swallow. She was a widow at eighteen, and has since buried a second husband and two coachmen.

" VI. The lady Waddle. She was married in the 15th year of her age to Sir Simon Waddle, Knight, aged threescore and twelve, by whom she had twins nine months after his decease. In the 55th year of her age she was married to James Spindle, Esq., a youth of one and twenty, who did not outlive the honeymoon.

" VII. Deborah Conquest. The case of this lady is something particular. She is the relict of Sir Sampson Conquest, some time justice of the quorum. Sir Sampson was seven foot high, and two foot in breadth from the tip of one shoulder to the other. He had married three wives, who all of them died in childbed. This terrified the whole sex, who none of them durst venture on Sir Sampson. At length Mrs. Deborah undertook him, and gave so good an account of him, that in three years' time she very fairly laid him out, and measured his length upon the ground. This exploit has gained her so great a reputation in the club, that they have added Sir Sampson's three victories to hers, and give her the merit of a fourth widowhood ; and she takes her place accordingly.

" VIII. The widow Wildfire, relict of Mr. John Wildfire, fox-hunter, who broke his neck over a six-bar

gate. She took his death so much to heart, that it was thought it would have put an end to her life, had she not diverted her sorrows by receiving the addresses of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who made love to her in the second month of her widowhood. This gentleman was discarded in a fortnight for the sake of a young Templar, who had the possession of her for six weeks after, till he was beaten out by a broken officer, who likewise gave up his place to a gentleman at court. The courtier was as short-lived a favourite as his predecessors, but had the pleasure to see himself succeeded by a long series of lovers, who followed the widow Wildfire to the 37th year of her age, at which time there ensued a cessation of ten years, when John Felt, haberdasher, took it in his head to be in love with her, and it is thought will very suddenly carry her off.

"IX. The last is pretty Mrs. Runnet, who broke her first husband's heart before she was sixteen, at which time she was entered of the club; but soon after left it, upon account of a second, whom she made so quick a despatch of, that she returned to her seat in less than a twelvemonth. This young matron is looked upon as the most rising member of the society, and will probably be in the president's chair before she dies.

"These ladies, upon their first institution, resolved to give the pictures of their deceased husbands to the club-room, but two of them bringing in their dead at full length, they covered all the walls; upon which

they came to a second resolution, that every matron should give her own picture, and set it round with her husbands in miniature.

"As they have most of them the misfortune to be troubled with the colic, they have a noble cellar of cordials and strong waters. When they grow maudlin, they are very apt to commemorate their former partners with a tear. But ask them which of their husbands they condole, they are not able to tell you, and discover plainly that they do not weep so much for the loss of a husband, as for the want of one.

"The principal rule, by which the whole society are to govern themselves, is this, to cry up the pleasures of a single life upon all occasions, in order to deter the rest of their sex from marriage, and engross the whole male world to themselves.

"They are obliged, when any one makes love to a member of the society, to communicate his name, at which time the whole assembly sit upon his reputation, person, fortune, and good humour; and if they find him qualified for a sister of the club, they lay their heads together how to make him sure. By this means they are acquainted with all the widow-hunters about town, who often afford them great diversion. There is an honest Irish gentleman, it seems, who knows nothing of this society, but at different times has made love to the whole club.

"Their conversation often turns upon their former husbands, and it is very diverting to hear them relate their several arts and stratagems, with which they

amused the jealous, pacified the choleric, or wheedled the good-natured man, till at last, to use the club phrase, 'They sent him out of the house with his heels foremost.'

"The politics which are most cultivated by this society of she-Machiavels, relate chiefly to these two points: How to treat a lover, and How to manage a husband. As for the first set of artifices, they are too numerous to come within the compass of your paper, and shall therefore be reserved for a second letter.

"The management of a husband is built upon the following doctrines, which are universally assented to by the whole club. Not to give him his head at first. Not to allow him too great freedoms and familiarities. Not to be treated by him like a raw girl, but as a woman that knows the world. Not to lessen anything of her former figure. To celebrate the generosity, or any other virtue, of a deceased husband, which she would recommend to his successor. To turn away all his old friends and servants, that she may have the dear man to herself. To make him disinherit the undutiful children of any former wife. Never to be thoroughly convinced of his affection, till he has made over to her all his goods and chattels.

"After so long a letter I am, without more ceremony, your humble servant," etc.

The Spectator, No. 561. Wednesday, June 30, 1714.

CXLVI

An Evening Meditation

—Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrasque, tractusque maris, coelumque profundum.
VIRG.

I WAS yesterday about sunset walking in the open fields, till the night insensibly fell upon me. I at first amused myself with all the richness and variety of colours, which appeared in the western parts of heaven: in proportion as they faded away and went out, several stars and planets appeared one after another, till the whole firmament was in a glow. The blueness of the ether was exceedingly heightened and enlivened by the season of the year, and by the rays of all those luminaries that passed through it. The galaxy appeared in its most beautiful white. To complete the scene, the full moon rose at length in that clouded majesty which Milton takes notice of, and opened to the eye a new picture of nature, which was more finely shaded, and disposed among softer lights, than that which the sun had before discovered to us.

As I was surveying the moon walking in her brightness, and taking her progress among the constellations, a thought rose in me which I believe very often perplexes and disturbs men of serious and contemplative natures. David himself fell into it in that reflection, "When I consider the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what

is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him ?" In the same manner, when I considered that infinite host of stars, or, to speak more philosophically, of suns, which were then shining upon me, with those innumerable sets of planets or worlds, which were moving round their respective suns; when I still enlarged the idea, and supposed another heaven of suns and worlds rising still above this which we discovered, and these still enlightened by a superior firmament of luminaries, which are planted at so great a distance that they may appear to the inhabitants of the former as the stars do to us;—in short, whilst I pursued this thought, I could not but reflect on that little insignificant figure which I myself bore amidst the immensity of God's works.

Were the sun, which enlightens this part of the creation, with all the host of planetary worlds that move about him, utterly extinguished and annihilated, they would not be missed more than a grain of sand upon the seashore. The space they possess is so exceedingly little in comparison of the whole, that it would scarce make a blank in the creation. The chasm would be imperceptible to an eye, that could take in the whole compass of nature, and pass from one end of the creation to the other, as it is possible there may be such a sense in ourselves hereafter, or in creatures which are at present more exalted than ourselves. We see many stars by the help of glasses, which we do not discover with our naked eyes; and the finer our telescopes are, the more still are our discoveries.

Huygenius carries this thought so far, that he does not think it impossible there may be stars whose light is not yet travelled down to us, since their first creation. There is no question but the universe has certain bounds set to it; but when we consider that it is the work of infinite power, prompted by infinite goodness, with an infinite space to exert itself in, how can our imagination set any bounds to it?

To return therefore to my first thought, I could not but look upon myself with secret horror, as a being that was not worth the smallest regard of one who had so great a work under his care and superintendency. I was afraid of being overlooked amidst the immensity of nature, and lost among that infinite variety of creatures, which in all probability swarm through all these immeasurable regions of matter.

In order to recover myself from this mortifying thought, I considered that it took its rise from those narrow conceptions, which we are apt to entertain of the divine nature. We ourselves cannot attend to many different objects at the same time. If we are careful to inspect some things, we must of course neglect others. This imperfection which we observe in ourselves, is an imperfection that cleaves in some degree to creatures of the highest capacities, as they are creatures, that is, beings of finite and limited natures. The presence of every created being is confined to a certain measure of space, and consequently his observation is stinted to a certain number of objects. The sphere in which we move and act and understand,

is of a wider circumference to one creature than another, according as we rise one above another in the scale of existence. But the widest of these our spheres has its circumference. When therefore we reflect on the divine nature, we are so used and accustomed to this imperfection in ourselves, that we cannot forbear in some measure ascribing it to him in whom there is no shadow of imperfection. Our reason indeed assures us that his attributes are infinite, but the poorness of our conceptions is such, that it cannot forbear setting bounds to everything it contemplates, till our reason comes again to our succour, and throws down all those little prejudices which rise in us unawares, and are natural to the mind of man.

We shall therefore utterly extinguish this melancholy thought, of our being overlooked by our Maker in the multiplicity of his works, and the infinity of those objects among which he seems to be incessantly employed, if we consider, in the first place, that he is omnipresent; and, in the second, that he is omniscient.

If we consider him in his omnipresence: his being passes through, actuates, and supports the whole frame of nature. His creation, and every part of it, is full of him. There is nothing he has made, that is either so distant, so little, or so inconsiderable, which he does not essentially inhabit. His substance is within the substance of every being, whether material or immaterial, and as intimately present to it as that Being is to itself. It would be an imperfection in him, were he able to remove out of one place into another,

or to withdraw himself from anything he has created, or from any part of that space which is diffused and spread abroad to infinity. In short, to speak of him in the language of the old philosopher, he is a being whose centre is everywhere, and his circumference nowhere.

In the second place, he is omniscient as well as omnipresent. His omniscience indeed necessarily and naturally flows from his omnipresence; he cannot but be conscious of every motion that arises in the whole material world, which he thus essentially pervades, and of every thought that is stirring in the intellectual world, to every part of which he is thus intimately united. Several moralists have considered the creation as the temple of God, which he has built with his own hands, and which is filled with his presence. Others have considered infinite space as the receptacle or rather the habitation of the Almighty; but the noblest and most exalted way of considering this infinite space is that of Sir Isaac Newton, who calls it the *sensorium* of the Godhead. Brutes and men have their *sensoriola*, or little *sensoriums*, by which they apprehend the presence and perceive the actions of a few objects, that lie contiguous to them. Their knowledge and observation turn within a very narrow circle. But as God Almighty cannot but perceive and know everything in which he resides, infinite space gives room to infinite knowledge, and is, as it were, an organ to omniscience.

Were the soul separate from the body, and with one

glance of thought should start beyond the bounds of the creation, should it for millions of years continue its progress through infinite space with the same activity, it would still find itself within the embrace of its Creator, and encompassed round with the immensity of the Godhead. Whilst we are in the body he is not less present with us, because he is concealed from us. "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" says Job. "Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him. On the left hand, where he does work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." In short, reason as well as revelation assures us, that he cannot be absent from us, notwithstanding he is undiscovered by us.

In this consideration of God Almighty's omnipresence and omniscience every uncomfortable thought vanishes. He cannot but regard everything that has being, especially such of his creatures who fear they are not regarded by him. He is privy to all their thoughts, and to that anxiety of heart in particular, which is apt to trouble them on this occasion; for as it is impossible he should overlook any of his creatures, so we may be confident that he regards, with an eye of mercy, those who endeavour to recommend themselves to his notice, and in an unfeigned humility of heart think themselves unworthy that he should be mindful of them.

The Spectator, No. 565. Friday, July 9, 1714.

CXLVII

The Political Scratch

—Inceptus clamor frustratur hiantes.—VIRG.

I HAVE received private advice from some of my correspondents, that if I would give my paper a general run, I should take care to season it with scandal. I have indeed observed of late, that few writings sell which are not filled with great names and illustrious titles. The reader generally casts his eye upon a new book, and if he finds several letters separated from one another by a dash, he buys it up, and peruses it with great satisfaction. An *M* and an *h*, a *T* and an *r*, with a short line between them, has sold many an insipid pamphlet. Nay, I have known a whole edition go off by virtue of two or three well-written *etc.*——*'s*.

A sprinkling of the words *faction*, *Frenchman*, *Papist*, *plunderer*, and the like significant terms, in an Italic character, hath also a very good effect upon the eye of the purchaser; not to mention *scribbler*, *liar*, *rogue*, *rascal*, *knave*, and *villain*, without which it is impossible to carry on a modern controversy.

Our party-writers are so sensible of the secret virtue of an innuendo to recommend their productions, that of late they never mention the Q——n or P——t at length, though they speak of them with honour, and with that deference which is due to them from every private person. It gives a secret satisfaction to the peruser of these mysterious works, that he is able to

decipher them without help, and by the strength of his own natural parts to fill up a blank space, or make out a word that has only the first or last letter to it.

Some of our authors indeed, when they would be more satirical than ordinary, omit only the vowels of a great man's name, and fall most unmercifully upon all the consonants. This way of writing was first of all introduced by T-m Br-wn, of facetious memory, who, after having gutted a proper name of all its intermediate vowels, used to plant it in his works, and make as free with it as he pleased, without any danger of the statute.

That I may imitate these celebrated authors, and publish a paper which shall be more taking than ordinary, I have here drawn up a very curious libel, in which a reader of penetration will find a great deal of concealed satire, and if he be acquainted with the present posture of affairs, will easily discover the meaning of it.

"If there are four persons in the nation who endeavour to bring all things into confusion, and ruin their native country, I think every honest Engl-shm-n ought to be upon his guard. That there are such, every one will agree with me who hears me name *** with his first friend and favourite ***, not to mention *** nor ***. These people may cry ch-rch, ch-rch, as long as they please, but, to make use of a homely proverb, 'The proof of the p-dd-ng is in the eating.' This I am sure of, that if a *certain prince* should concur with a *certain prelate* (and we have Monsieur Z——n's

word for it), our posterity would be in a sweet p-ckle. Must the British nation suffer forsooth, because my Lady Q—p—t—s has been disobliged? or is it reasonable that our English fleet, which used to be the terror of the ocean, should lie wind-bound for the sake of a ——. I love to speak out and declare my mind clearly, when I am talking for the good of my country. I will not make my court to an ill man, though he were a B——y or a T——t. Nay, I would not stick to call so wretched a politician a traitor, an enemy to his country, and a bl-nd-rb-ss," etc. etc.

The remaining part of this political treatise, which is written after the manner of the most celebrated authors in Great Britain, I may communicate to the public at a more convenient season. In the meanwhile I shall leave this with my curious reader, as some ingenious writers do their enigmas, and if any sagacious person can fairly unriddle it, I will print his explanation, and, if he pleases, acquaint the world with his name.

I hope this short essay will convince my readers, it is not for want of abilities that I avoid state-tracts, and that if I would apply my mind to it, I might in a little time be as great a master of the political scratch as any the most eminent writer of the age. I shall only add, that in order to outshine all the modern race of Syncopists, and thoroughly content my English readers, I intend shortly to publish a *Spectator*, that shall not have a single vowel in it.

The Spectator, No. 567. Wednesday, July 14, 1714.

CXLVIII

A False Scent

—*Dum recitas, incipit esse tuus.*—MART.

I WAS yesterday in a coffee-house not far from the Royal Exchange, where I observed three persons in close conference over a pipe of tobacco; upon which, having filled one for my own use, I lighted it at the little wax candle that stood before them; and after having thrown in two or three whiffs amongst them, sat down and made one of the company. I need not tell my reader, that lighting a man's pipe at the same candle is looked upon among brother-smokers as an overture to conversation and friendship. As we here laid our heads together in a very amicable manner, being intrenched under a cloud of our own raising, I took up the last *Spectator*, and casting my eye over it, "The *Spectator*," says I, "is very witty to-day"; upon which a lusty lethargic old gentleman, who sat at the upper end of the table, having gradually blown out of his mouth a great deal of smoke, which he had been collecting for some time before, "Ay," says he, "more witty than wise, I am afraid." His neighbour, who sat at his right hand, immediately coloured, and being an angry politician, laid down his pipe with so much wrath that he broke it in the middle, and by that means furnished me with a tobacco-stopper. I took it up very sedately, and looking him full in the face, made use of it from time to time all the while he was speaking:

"This fellow," says he, "cannot for his life keep out of politics. Do you see how he abuses four great men here?" I fixed my eye very attentively on the paper, and asked him if he meant those who were represented by asterisks. "Asterisks," says he, "do you call them? they are all of them stars. He might as well have put garters to 'em. Then pray do but mind the two or three next lines! Ch-rch and p-dd-ng in the same sentence! Our clergy are very much beholden to him." Upon this the third gentleman, who was of a mild disposition, and, as I found, a Whig in his heart, desired him not to be too severe upon the *Spectator* neither; "For," says he, "you find he is very cautious of giving offence, and has therefore put two dashes into his pudding." "A fig for his dash," says the angry politician. "In his next sentence he gives a plain innuendo, that our posterity will be in a sweet p-ckle. What does the fool mean by his pickle? why does he not write at length, if he means honestly?" "I have read over the whole sentence," says I, "but I look upon the parenthesis in the belly of it to be the most dangerous part, and as full of insinuations as it can hold. But who," says I, "is my Lady Q—p—t—s?" "Ay, answer that if you can, sir," says the furious statesman to the poor Whig that sat over against him. But without giving him time to reply, "I do assure you," says he, "were I my Lady Q—p—t—s, I would sue him for *scandalum magnatum*. What is the world come to? must everybody be allowed to——?" He had by this time filled a new pipe, and applying it to

his lips, when we expected the last word of his sentence, put us off with a whiff of tobacco; which he redoubled with so much rage and trepidation, that he almost stifled the whole company. After a short pause, I owned that I thought the *Spectator* had gone too far in writing so many letters in my Lady Q—p—t—s's name; "But, however," says I, "he has made a little amends for it in his next sentence, where he leaves a blank space without so much as a consonant to direct us! I mean," says I, "after those words, *The fleet that used to be the terror of the ocean, should be wind-bound for the sake of a* ——; after which ensues a chasm, that in my opinion looks modest enough." "Sir," says my antagonist, "you may easily know his meaning by his gaping; I suppose he designs his chasm, as you call it, for an hole to creep out at, but I believe it will hardly serve his turn. Who can endure to see the great officers of state, the B—y's and T—t's, treated after so scurrilous a manner?" "I can't for my life," says I, "imagine who they are the *Spectator* means." "No!" says he, "—— Your humble servant, sir!" Upon which he flung himself back in his chair after a contemptuous manner, and smiled upon the old lethargic gentleman on his left hand, who I found was his great admirer. The Whig however had begun to conceive a goodwill towards me, and seeing my pipe out, very generously offered me the use of his box; but I declined it with great civility, being obliged to meet a friend about that time in another quarter of the city.

At my leaving the coffee-house, I could not forbear reflecting with myself upon that gross tribe of fools who may be termed the over-wise, and upon the difficulty of writing anything in this censorious age, which a weak head may not construe into private satire and personal reflection.

A man who has a good nose at an innuendo, smells treason and sedition in the most innocent words that can be put together, and never sees a vice or folly stigmatized, but finds out one or other of his acquaintance pointed at by the writer. I remember an empty pragmatical fellow in the country, who, upon reading over *The Whole Duty of Man*,[1] had written the names of several persons in the village at the side of every sin which is mentioned by that excellent author; so that he had converted one of the best books in the world into a libel against the 'squire, churchwardens, overseers of the poor, and all other the most considerable persons in the parish. This book, with these

[1] A work of edification published anonymously in 1660. The authorship is unknown. When some of Dr. Johnson's friends "expressed a wonder why the author of so excellent a book as *The Whole Duty of Man* should conceal himself," the sage observed that "there may be different reasons assigned for this, any one of which would be very sufficient. He may have been a clergyman, and may have thought that his religious counsels would have less weight when known to come from a man whose profession was theology. He may have been a man whose practice was not suitable to his principles, so that his character might injure the effect of his book, which he had written in a season of penitence. Or he may have been a man of rigid self-denial, so that he would have no reward for his pious labours while in this world, but refer it all to a future state." See *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, edited by G. Birbeck Hill, vol. ii. p. 239.

extraordinary marginal notes, fell accidentally into the hands of one who had never seen it before; upon which there arose a current report that somebody had written a book against the 'squire and the whole parish. The minister of the place, having at that time a controversy with some of his congregation upon the account of his tithes, was under some suspicion of being the author, till the good man set his people right, by showing them that the satirical passages might be applied to several others of two or three neighbouring villages, and that the book was writ against all the sinners in England.

The Spectator, No. 568. Friday, July 16, 1714.

CXLIX

Eccentricity

Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui caetera, vincit
Impetus; et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.—OVID.

I REMEMBER a young man of very lively parts and of a sprightly turn in conversation, who had only one fault, which was an inordinate desire of appearing fashionable. This ran him into many amours, and consequently into many distempers. He never went to bed till two o'clock in the morning, because he would not be a queer fellow; and was every now and then knocked down by a constable, to signalize his vivacity. He was initiated into half a dozen clubs before he was one and twenty, and so improved in them his natural gaiety of

temper, that you might frequently trace him to his lodgings by a range of broken windows, and other the like monuments of wit and gallantry. To be short, after having fully established his reputation of being a very agreeable rake, he died of old age at five and twenty.

There is indeed nothing which betrays a man into so many errors and inconveniences, as the desire of not appearing singular; for which reason it is very necessary to form a right idea of singularity, that we may know when it is laudable and when it is vicious. In the first place, every man of sense will agree with me, that singularity is laudable, when, in contradiction to a multitude, it adheres to the dictates of conscience, morality, and honour. In these cases we ought to consider, that it is not custom, but duty, which is the rule of action; and that we should be only so far sociable, as we are reasonable creatures. Truth is never the less so, for not being attended to; and it is the nature of actions, not the number of actors, by which we ought to regulate our behaviour. Singularity in concerns of this kind is to be looked upon as heroic bravery, in which a man leaves the species only as he soars above it. What greater instance can there be of a weak and pusillanimous temper, than for a man to pass his whole life in opposition to his own sentiments? or not to dare to be what he thinks he ought to be?

Singularity therefore is only vicious when it makes men act contrary to reason, or when it puts them upon distinguishing themselves by trifles. As for the first

of these, who are singular in anything that is irreligious, immoral, or dishonourable, I believe every one will easily give them up. I shall therefore speak of those only who are remarkable for their singularity in things of no importance, as in dress, behaviour, conversation, and all the little intercourses of life. In these cases there is a certain deference due to custom; and notwithstanding there may be a colour of reason to deviate from the multitude in some particulars, a man ought to sacrifice his private inclinations and opinions to the practice of the public. It must be confessed that good sense often makes a humorist; but then it unqualifies him for being of any moment in the world, and renders him ridiculous to persons of a much inferior understanding.

I have heard of a gentleman in the north of England, who was a remarkable instance of this foolish singularity. He had laid it down as a rule within himself, to act in the most indifferent parts of life according to the most abstracted notions of reason and good sense, without any regard to fashion or example. This humour broke out at first in many little oddnesses: he had never any stated hours for his dinner, supper, or sleep; because, said he, we ought to attend the calls of nature, and not set our appetites to our meals, but bring our meals to our appetites. In his conversation with country gentlemen, he would not make use of a phrase that was not strictly true: he never told any of them that he was his humble servant, but that he was his wellwisher; and would rather be thought a

malcontent than drink the king's health when he was not a-dry. He would thrust his head out of his chamber-window every morning, and after having gaped for fresh air about half an hour, repeat fifty verses as loud as he could bawl them for the benefit of his lungs; to which end he generally took them out of Homer; the Greek tongue, especially in that author, being more deep and sonorous, and more conducive to expectoration, than any other. He had many other particularities, for which he gave sound and philosophical reasons. As this humour still grew upon him, he chose to wear a turban instead of a periwig; concluding very justly, that a bandage of clean linen about his head was much more wholesome, as well as cleanly, than the caul of a wig, which is soiled with frequent perspirations. He afterwards judiciously observed, that the many ligatures in our English dress must naturally check the circulation of the blood; for which reason he made his breeches and his doublet of one continued piece of cloth, after the 'manner of the Hussars. In short, by following the pure dictates of reason, he at length departed so much from the rest of his countrymen, and indeed from his whole species, that his friends would have clapped him into Bedlam, and have begged his estate; but the judge, being informed that he did no harm, contented himself with issuing out a commission of lunacy against him, and putting his estate into the hands of proper guardians.

The fate of this philosopher puts me in mind of a remark in Monsieur Fontenelle's *Dialogues of the Dead.*

"The ambitious and the covetous," says he, "are madmen to all intents and purposes, as much as those who are shut up in dark rooms; but they have the good luck to have numbers on their side, whereas the frenzy of one who is given up for a lunatic, is a frenzy *hors d'œuvre*"; that is, in other words, something which is singular in its kind, and does not fall in with the madness of a multitude.

The Spectator, No. 576. Wednesday, August 4, 1714.

CL

The Itch of Writing

—Tenet insanabile multos
Scribendi cacoethes— JUV.

THERE is a certain distemper, which is mentioned neither by Galen nor Hippocrates, nor to be met with in the *London Dispensary*. Juvenal, in the motto of my paper, terms it a *cacoethes*; which is a hard word for a disease called in plain English, *the itch of writing*. This *cacoethes* is as epidemical as the small-pox, there being very few who are not seized with it some time or other in their lives. There is, however, this difference in these two distempers, that the first, after having indisposed you for a time, never returns again; whereas this I am speaking of, when it is once got into the blood, seldom comes out of it. The British nation is very much afflicted with this malady, and though very

many remedies have been applied to persons infected with it, few of them have ever proved successful. Some have been cauterized with satires and lampoons, but have received little or no benefit from them; others have had their heads fastened for an hour together between a cleft board,[1] which is made use of as a cure for the disease when it appears in its greatest malignity. There is indeed one kind of this malady which has been sometimes removed, like the biting of a tarantula, with the sound of a musical instrument, which is commonly known by the name of a cat-call. But if you have a patient of this kind under your care, you may assure yourself there is no other way of recovering him effectually, but by forbidding him the use of pen, ink, and paper.

But, to drop the allegory before I have tired it out, there is no species of scribblers more offensive and more incurable than your periodical writers, whose works return upon the public on certain days and at stated times. We have not the consolation in the perusal of these authors, which we find at the reading of all others, namely, that we are sure, if we have but patience, we may come to the end of their labours. I have often admired a humorous saying of Diogenes, who, reading a dull author to several of his friends, when every one began to be tired, finding he was almost come to a blank leaf at the end of it, cried, "Courage, lads, I see land." On the contrary, our progress through that kind of writers I am now

[1] The pillory.

speaking of is never at an end. One day makes work for another, we do not know when to promise ourselves rest.

It is a melancholy thing to consider, that the art of printing, which might be the greatest blessing to mankind, should prove detrimental to us, and that it should be made use of to scatter prejudice and ignorance through a people, instead of conveying to them truth and knowledge.

I was lately reading a very whimsical treatise, entitled, *William Ramsay's Vindication of Astrology*. This profound author, among many mystical passages, has the following one: "The absence of the sun is not the cause of night, forasmuch as his light is so great that it may illuminate the earth all over at once as clear as broad day, but there are tenebrificous and dark stars, by whose influence night is brought on, and which do ray out darkness and obscurity upon the earth, as the sun does light."

I consider writers in the same view this sage astrologer does the heavenly bodies. Some of them are stars that scatter light, as others do darkness. I could mention several authors who are tenebrificous stars of the first magnitude, and point out a knot of gentlemen who have been dull in concert, and may be looked upon as a dark constellation. The nation has been a great while benighted with several of these antiluminaries. I suffered them to ray out their darkness as long as I was able to endure it, till at length I came to a resolution of rising upon them, and

hope in a little time to drive them quite out of the British hemisphere.

The Spectator, No. 582. Wednesday, August 18, 1714.

CLI

An Antediluvian Romance

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori,
Hic nemus, hic toto tecum consumerer aevo.—VIRG.

HILPA was one of the 150 daughters of Zilpah of the race of Cohu, by whom some of the learned think is meant Cain. She was exceedingly beautiful, and when she was but a girl of threescore and ten years of age, received the addresses of several who made love to her. Among these were two brothers, Harpath and Shalum. Harpath, being the firstborn, was master of that fruitful region which lies at the foot of Mount Tirzah, in the southern parts of China. Shalum (which is to say the planter, in the Chinese language) possessed all the neighbouring hills, and that great range of mountains which goes under the name of Tirzah. Harpath was of a haughty contemptuous spirit; Shalum was of a gentle disposition, beloved both by God and man.

It is said that, among the antediluvian women, the daughters of Cohu had their minds wholly set upon riches; for which reason the beautiful Hilpa preferred Harpath to Shalum, because of his numerous flocks and herds, that covered all the low country which runs

along the foot of Mount Tirzah, and is watered by several fountains and streams breaking out of the sides of that mountain.

Harpath made so quick a dispatch of his courtship, that he married Hilpa in the hundredth year of her age; and being of an insolent temper, laughed to scorn his brother Shalum for having pretended to the beautiful Hilpa, when he was master of nothing but a long chain of rocks and mountains. This so much provoked Shalum, that he is said to have cursed his brother in the bitterness of his heart, and to have prayed that one of his mountains might fall upon his head, if ever he came within the shadow of it.

From this time forward Harpath would never venture out of the valleys, but came to an untimely end in the 250th year of his age, being drowned in a river as he attempted to cross it. This river is called to this day, from his name who perished in it, the river Harpath, and, what is very remarkable, issues out of one of those mountains which Shalum wished might fall upon his brother, when he cursed him in the bitterness of his heart.

Hilpa was in the 160th year of her age at the death of her husband, having brought him but 50 children, before he was snatched away, as has been already related. Many of the antediluvians made love to the young widow, though no one was thought so likely to succeed in her affections as her first lover Shalum, who renewed his court to her about ten years after the death of Harpath; for it was not thought decent in

those days that a widow should be seen by a man within ten years after the decease of her husband.

Shalum falling into a deep melancholy, and resolving to take away that objection which had been raised against him when he made his first addresses to Hilpa, began, immediately after her marriage with Harpath, to plant all that mountainous region which fell to his lot in the division of this country. He knew how to adapt every plant to its proper soil, and is thought to have inherited many traditional secrets of that art from the first man. This employment turned at length to his profit as well as to his amusement: his mountains were in a few years shaded with young trees, that gradually shot up into groves, woods, and forests, intermixed with walks and lawns and gardens; insomuch that the whole region, from a naked and desolate prospect, began now to look like a second paradise. The pleasantness of the place, and the agreeable disposition of Shalum, who was reckoned one of the mildest and wisest of all who lived before the Flood, drew into it multitudes of people, who were perpetually employed in the sinking of wells, the digging of trenches, and the hollowing of trees, for the better distribution of water through every part of this spacious plantation.

The habitations of Shalum looked every year more beautiful in the eyes of Hilpa, who, after the space of 70 autumns, was wonderfully pleased with the distant prospect of Shalum's hills, which were then covered with innumerable tufts of trees and gloomy

scenes, that gave a magnificence to the place and converted it into one of the finest landscapes the eye of man could behold.

The Chinese record a letter which Shalum is said to have written to Hilpa in the eleventh year of her widowhood. I shall here translate it, without departing from that noble simplicity of sentiments and plainness of manners which appears in the original.

Shalum was at this time 180 years old, and Hilpa 170.

Shalum, master of Mount Tirzah, to Hilpa, mistress of the Valleys.

"*In the 788th year of the Creation.*

"What have I not suffered, O thou daughter of Zilpah, since thou gavest thyself away in marriage to my rival? I grew weary of the light of the sun, and have been ever since covering myself with woods and forests. These threescore and ten years have I bewailed the loss of thee on the tops of Mount Tirzah, and soothed my melancholy among a thousand gloomy shades of my own raising. My dwellings are at present as the garden of God; every part of them is filled with fruits and flowers and fountains. The whole mountain is perfumed for thy reception. Come up into it, O my beloved, and let us people this spot of the new world with a beautiful race of mortals; let us multiply exceedingly among these delightful shades, and fill every quarter of them with sons and daughters. Remember, O thou daughter of Zilpah, that the age

of men is but a thousand years; that beauty is the admiration but of a few centuries. It flourishes as a mountain oak, or as a cedar on the top of Tirzah, which in three or four hundred years will fade away, and never be thought of by posterity, unless a young wood springs from its roots. Think well on this, and remember thy neighbour in the mountains."

Having here inserted this letter, which I look upon as the only antediluvian *billet-doux* now extant, I shall in my next paper give the answer to it, and the sequel of this story.

The Spectator, No. 584. Monday, August 23, 1714.

CLII

An Antediluvian Romance (concluded)

Ipsi laetitia voces ad sidera jactant
Intonsi montes: ipsae jam carmina rupes,
Ipsa sonant arbusta— VIRG.

The sequel of the story of Shalum and Hilpa.

THE letter inserted in my last had so good an effect upon Hilpa, that she answered it in less than a twelvemonth, after the following manner.

Hilpa, mistress of the Valleys, to Shalum, master of Mount Tirzah.

"In the 789th year of the Creation.

"What have I to do with thee, O Shalum? Thou praisest Hilpa's beauty, but art thou not secretly

enamoured with the verdure of her meadows? Art thou not more affected with the prospect of her green valleys, than thou wouldest be with the sight of her person? The lowings of my herds, and the bleatings of my flocks, make a pleasant echo in thy mountains, and sound sweetly in thy ears. What though I am delighted with the wavings of thy forests, and those breezes of perfumes which flow from the top of Tirzah: are these like the riches of the valley?

"I know thee, O Shalum; thou art more wise and happy than any of the sons of men. Thy dwellings are among the cedars; thou searchest out the diversity of soils, thou understandest the influences of the stars, and markest the change of seasons. Can a woman appear lovely in the eyes of such a one? Disquiet me not, O Shalum; let me alone, that I may enjoy those goodly possessions which are fallen to my lot. Win me not by thy enticing words. May thy trees increase and multiply; mayest thou add wood to wood, and shade to shade; but tempt not Hilpa to destroy thy solitude, and make thy retirement populous."

The Chinese say, that a little time afterwards she accepted of a treat in one of the neighbouring hills, to which Shalum had invited her. This treat lasted for two years, and is said to have cost Shalum five hundred antelopes, two thousand ostriches, and a thousand tun of milk; but what most of all recommended it, was that variety of delicious fruits and pot-herbs, in which no person then living could any way equal Shalum.

He treated her in the bower which he had planted amidst the wood of nightingales. The wood was made up of such fruit-trees and plants as are most agreeable to the several kinds of singing birds; so that it had drawn into it all the music of the country, and was filled from one end of the year to the other with the most agreeable concert in season.

He showed her every day some beautiful and surprising scene in this new region of woodlands; and as by this means he had all the opportunities he could wish for of opening his mind to her, he succeeded so well, that upon her departure she made him a kind of promise, and gave him her word to return him a positive answer in less than fifty years.

She had not been long among her own people in the valleys, when she received new overtures, and at the same time a most splendid visit from Mishpach, who was a mighty man of old, and had built a great city, which he called after his own name. Every house was made for at least a thousand years, nay, there were some that were leased out for three lives; so that the quantity of stone and timber consumed in this building is scarce to be imagined by those who live in the present age of the world. This great man entertained her with the voice of musical instruments which had been lately invented, and danced before her to the sound of the timbrel. He also presented her with several domestic utensils wrought in brass and iron, which had been newly found out for the conveniency of life. In the meantime Shalum grew very uneasy

with himself, and was sorely displeased at Hilpa for the reception which she had given to Mishpach, insomuch that he never wrote to her or spoke of her during a whole revolution of Saturn; but finding that this intercourse went no further than a visit, he again renewed his addresses to her, who during his long silence is said very often to have cast a wishing eye upon Mount Tirzah.

Her mind continued wavering about twenty years longer between Shalum and Mishpach; for though her inclinations favoured the former, her interest pleaded very powerfully for the other. While her heart was in this unsettled condition, the following accident happened which determined her choice. A high tower of wood that stood in the city of Mishpach, having caught fire by a flash of lightning, in a few days reduced the whole town to ashes. Mishpach resolved to rebuild the place, whatever it should cost him; and having already destroyed all the timber of the country, he was forced to have recourse to Shalum, whose forests were now two hundred years old. He purchased these woods with so many herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, and with such a vast extent of fields and pastures, that Shalum was now grown more wealthy than Mishpach, and therefore appeared so charming in the eyes of Zilpah's daughter, that she no longer refused him in marriage. On the day in which he brought her up into the mountains he raised a most prodigious pile of cedar and of every sweet-smelling wood, which reached above 300 cubits in height: he also cast into

the pile bundles of myrrh and sheaves of spikenard, enriching it with every spicy shrub, and making it fat with the gums of his plantations. This was the burnt-offering which Shalum offered in the day of his espousals: the smoke of it ascended up to heaven, and filled the whole country with incense and perfume.

The Spectator, No. 585. Wednesday, August 25, 1714.

CLIII

Peddling Critics

—Studium sine divite vena.—HOR.

I LOOK upon the play-house as a world within itself. They have lately furnished the middle region of it with a new set of meteors, in order to give the sublime to many modern tragedies. I was there last winter at the first rehearsal of the new thunder, which is much more deep and sonorous than any hitherto made use of. They have a Salmoneus behind the scenes, who plays it off with great success. Their lightnings are made to flash more briskly than heretofore; their clouds are also better furbelowed and more voluminous; not to mention a violent storm locked up in a great chest that is designed for *The Tempest*. They are also provided with above a dozen showers of snow, which, as I am informed, are the plays of many unsuccessful poets artificially cut and shredded for that use. Mr.

Rimer's *Edgar*[1] is to fall in snow at the next acting of *King Lear*, in order to heighten, or rather to alleviate, the distress of that unfortunate prince; and to serve by way of decoration to a piece which that great critic has written against.

I do not indeed wonder that the actors should be such professed enemies to those among our nation who are commonly known by the name of critics, since it is a rule among these gentlemen to fall upon a play, not because it is ill written, but because it takes. Several of them lay it down as a maxim, that whatever dramatic performance has a long run, must of necessity be good for nothing; as though the first precept in poetry were *not to please*. Whether this rule holds good or not, I shall leave to the determination of those who are better judges than myself: if it does, I am sure it tends very much to the honour of those gentlemen who have established it; few of their pieces having been disgraced by a run of three days, and most of them being so exquisitely written, that the town would never give them more than one night's hearing.

I have a great esteem for a true critic, such as Aristotle and Longinus among the Greeks, Horace and Quintilian among the Romans, Boileau and Dacier among the French. But it is our misfortune, that some

[1] Thomas Rhymer's tragedy *Edgar, or the English Monarch*, was licensed and damned in 1677. In his *Short View of Tragedy*, published in 1693, the unsuccessful dramatist turned critic, and attacked Shakespeare and other luminaries of the Elizabethan stage. Of him Dryden remarked that "the corruption of a poet is the generation of a critic." He died in 1713, the year before Addison thus publicly expressed his opinion of *Edgar*.

who set up for professed critics among us are so stupid, that they do not know how to put ten words together with elegance or common propriety, and withal so illiterate, that they have no taste of the learned languages, and therefore criticize upon old authors only at second-hand. They judge of them by what others have written, and not by any notions they have of the authors themselves. The words unity, action, sentiment, and diction, pronounced with an air of authority, give them a figure among unlearned readers, who are apt to believe they are very deep, because they are unintelligible. The ancient critics are full of the praises of their contemporaries; they discover beauties which escaped the observation of the vulgar, and very often find out reasons for palliating and excusing such little slips and oversights as were committed in the writings of eminent authors. On the contrary, most of the smatterers in criticism who appear among us, make it their business to vilify and depreciate every new production that gains applause, to descry imaginary blemishes, and to prove by far-fetched arguments, that what pass for beauties in any celebrated piece are faults and errors. In short, the writings of these critics compared with those of the ancients, are like the works of the sophists compared with those of the old philosophers.

Envy and cavil are the natural fruits of laziness and ignorance; which was probably the reason, that in the heathen mythology Momus is said to be the son of *Nox* and *Somnus*, of Darkness and Sleep. Idle men,

who have not been at the pains to accomplish or distinguish themselves, are very apt to detract from others; as ignorant men are very subject to decry those beauties in a celebrated work which they have not eyes to discover. Many of our sons of Momus, who dignify themselves by the name of critics, are the genuine descendants of these two illustrious ancestors. They are often led into those numerous absurdities, in which they daily instruct the people, by not considering that, first, there is sometimes a greater judgment shown in deviating from the rules of art, than in adhering to them; and, secondly, that there is more beauty in the works of a great genius who is ignorant of all the rules of art, than in the works of a little genius, who not only knows, but scrupulously observes them.

First, we may often take notice of men who are perfectly acquainted with all the rules of good writing, and notwithstanding choose to depart from them on extraordinary occasions. I could give instances out of all the tragic writers of antiquity who have shown their judgment in this particular, and purposely receded from an established rule of the drama, when it has made way for a much higher beauty than the observation of such a rule would have been. Those who have surveyed the noblest pieces of architecture and statuary, both ancient and modern, know very well that there are frequent deviations from art in the works of the greatest masters, which have produced a much nobler effect than a more accurate and exact

way of proceeding could have done. This often arises from what the Italians call the *gusto grande* in these arts, which is what we call the sublime in writing.

In the next place, our critics do not seem sensible that there is more beauty in the works of a great genius who is ignorant of the rules of art, than in those of a little genius who knows and observes them. It is of these men of genius that Terence speaks, in opposition to the little artificial cavillers of his time :

> *Quorum aemulari exoptat negligentiam*
> *Potius, quam istorum obscuram diligentiam.*

A critic may have the same consolation in the ill success of his play, as Dr. South tells us a physician has at the death of a patient, that he was killed *secundum artem*. Our inimitable Shakespeare is a stumbling-block to the whole tribe of these rigid critics. Who would not rather read one of his plays, where there is not a single rule of the stage observed, than any production of a modern critic, where there is not one of them violated ? Shakespeare was indeed born with all the seeds of poetry, and may be compared to the stone in Pyrrhus's ring, which, as Pliny tells us, had the figure of Apollo and the nine Muses in the veins of it, produced by the spontaneous hand of nature, without any help from art.

The Spectator, No. 592. Friday, September 10, 1714.

CLIV

Lions in Town

Quale portentum neque militaris
Daunia in latis alit esculetis,
Nec Jubae tellus generat, leonum
Arida nutrix. HOR.

I QUESTION not but my country customers will be surprised to hear me complain that this town is, of late years, very much infested with lions; and will, perhaps, look upon it as a strange piece of news, when I assure them, that there are many of these beasts of prey who walk our streets in broad daylight, beating about from coffee-house to coffee-house, and seeking whom they may devour.

To unriddle this paradox, I must acquaint my rural reader, that we polite men of the town give the name of a lion to any one that is a great man's spy. And, whereas I cannot discharge my office of Guardian without setting a mark on such a noxious animal, and cautioning my wards against him, I design this whole paper as an essay upon the political lion.

It has cost me a great deal of time to discover the reason of this appellation, but after many disquisitions and conjectures on so obscure a subject, I find there are two accounts of it more satisfactory than the rest. In the republic of Venice, which has been always the mother of politics, there are near the Doge's palace several large figures of lions, curiously wrought in

marble, with mouths gaping in a most enormous manner. Those who have a mind to give the state any private intelligence of what passes in the city, put their hands into the mouth of one of these lions, and convey into it a paper of such private informations as any way regard the interest or safety of the commonwealth. By this means all the secrets of state come out of the lion's mouth. The informer is concealed, it is the lion that tells everything. In short, there is not a mismanagement in office or a murmur in conversation, which the lion does not acquaint the government with. For this reason, say the learned, a spy is very properly distinguished by the name of lion.

I must confess, this etymology is plausible enough, and I did for some time acquiesce in it, till about a year or two ago I met with a little manuscript, which sets the whole matter in a clear light. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, says my author, the renowned Walsingham had many spies in his service, from whom the government received great advantage. The most eminent among them was the statesman's barber, whose surname was Lion. This fellow had an admirable knack of fishing out the secrets of his customers, as they were under his hands. He would rub and lather a man's head, till he had got out everything that was in it. He had a certain snap in his fingers and a volubility in his tongue, that would engage a man to talk with him, whether he would or no. By this means he became an inexhaustible fund of private intelligence, and so signalized himself in the capacity

of a spy, that from his time a master-spy goes under the name of a lion.

Walsingham had a most excellent penetration, and never attempted to turn any man into a lion whom he did not see highly qualified for it, when he was in his human condition. Indeed, the speculative men of those times say of him, that he would now and then play them off, and expose them a little unmercifully; but that, in my opinion, seems only good policy, for otherwise they might set up for men again, when they thought fit, and desert his service. But however, though in that very corrupt age he made use of these animals, he had a great esteem for true men, and always exerted the highest generosity in offering them more, without asking terms of them, and doing more for them out of mere respect for their talents, though against him, than they could expect from any other minister whom they had served never so conspicuously. This made Raleigh (who professed himself his opponent) say one day to a friend, "Pox take this Walsingham, he baffles everybody, he won't so much as let a man hate him in private." True it is, that by the wanderings, roarings, and lurkings of his lions, he knew the way to every man breathing, who had not a contempt for the world itself: he had lions rampant whom he used for the service of the church, and couchant who were to lie down for the Queen. They were so much at command, that the couchant would act as rampant, and the rampant as couchant, without being the least out of countenance, and all this

within four and twenty hours. Walsingham had the pleasantest life in the world, for by the force of his power and intelligence he saw men as they really were, and not as the world thought of them: all this was principally brought about by feeding his lions well, or keeping them hungry, according to their different constitutions.

Having given this short, but necessary account of this statesman and his barber, who, like the tailor in Shakespeare's *Pyramus and Thisbe,* was a man made as other men are, notwithstanding he was a nominal lion, I shall proceed to the description of this strange species of creatures. Ever since the wise Walsingham was secretary in this nation, our statesmen are said to have encouraged the breed among us, as very well knowing that a lion in our British arms is one of the supporters of the crown, and that it is impossible for a government, in which there are such variety of factions and intrigues, to subsist without this necessary animal.

A lion, or master-spy, has several jackals under him, who are his retailers of intelligence, and bring him in materials for his report; his chief haunt is a coffee-house, and as his voice is exceeding strong, it aggravates the sound of everything it repeats.

As the lion generally thirsts after blood, and is of a fierce and cruel nature, there are no secrets which he hunts after with more delight, than those that cut off heads, hang, draw, and quarter, or end in the ruin of the person who becomes his prey. If he gets the wind

of any word or action that may do a man good, it is not for his purpose; he quits the chase, and falls into a more agreeable scent.

He discovers a wonderful sagacity in seeking after his prey. He couches and frisks about in a thousand sportful motions to draw it within his reach, and has a particular way of imitating the sound of the creature whom he would ensnare; an artifice to be met with in no beast of prey, except the hyena and the political lion.

You seldom see a cluster of newsmongers without a lion in the midst of them. He never misses taking his stand within ear-shot of one of those little ambitious men who set up for orators in places of public resort. If there is a whispering-hole, or any public-spirited corner in a coffee-house, you never fail of seeing a lion couched upon his elbow in some part of the neighbourhood.

A lion is particularly addicted to the perusal of every loose paper that lies in his way. He appears more than ordinary attentive to what he reads, while he listens to those who are about him. He takes up the *Postman* and snuffs the candle, that he may hear the better by it. I have seen a lion pore upon a single paragraph in an old gazette for two hours together, if his neighbours have been talking all that while.

Having given a full description of this monster, for the benefit of such innocent persons as may fall into his walks, I shall apply a word or two to the lion himself, whom I would desire to consider, that he is

a creature hated both by God and man, and regarded with the utmost contempt even by such as make use of him. Hangmen and executioners are necessary in a state, and so may the animal I have been here mentioning; but how despicable is the wretch that takes on him so vile an employment! there is scarce a being that would not suffer by a comparison with him, except that Being only who acts the same kind of part, and is both the tempter and accuser of mankind.

N.B.—Mr. Ironside has, within five weeks last past, muzzled three lions, gorged five, and killed one. On Monday next the skin of the dead one will be hung up, *in terrorem*, at Button's coffee-house, over against Tom's in Covent Garden.

The Guardian, No. 71. Tuesday, June 2, 1713.

CLV

The Lion's Head

In sese redit—VIRG.

THE first who undertook to instruct the world in single papers was Isaac Bickerstaff of famous memory, a man nearly related to the family of the Ironsides. We have often smoked a pipe together, for I was so much in his books, that at his decease he left me a silver standish, a pair of spectacles, and the lamp by which he used to write his lucubrations.

The venerable Isaac was succeeded by a gentleman of the same family, very memorable for the shortness

of his face and of his speeches. This ingenious author published his thoughts and held his tongue, with great applause, for two years together.

I, Nestor Ironside, have now for some time undertaken to fill the place of these my two renowned kinsmen and predecessors. For it is observed of every branch of our family, that we have all of us a wonderful inclination to give good advice, though it is remarked of some of us, that we are apt on this occasion rather to give than take.

However it be, I cannot but observe with some secret pride, that this way of writing diurnal papers has not succeeded for any space of time in the hands of any persons who are not of our line. I believe I speak within compass, when I affirm that above a hundred different authors have endeavoured after our family-way of writing, some of which have been writers in other kinds of the greatest eminence in the kingdom; but I do not know how it has happened, they have none of them hit upon the art. Their projects have always dropped after a few unsuccessful essays. It puts me in mind of a story which was lately told me by a pleasant friend of mine, who has a very fine hand on the violin. His maidservant seeing his instrument lying upon the table, and being sensible there was music in it, if she knew how to fetch it out, drew the bow over every part of the strings, and at last told her master she had tried the fiddle all over, but could not for her heart find whereabout the tune lay.

But though the whole burden of such a paper is

only fit to rest on the shoulders of a Bickerstaff or an Ironside, there are several who can acquit themselves of a single day's labour in it with suitable abilities. These are gentlemen whom I have often invited to this trial of wit, and who have several of them acquitted themselves to my private emolument, as well as to their own reputation. My paper among the republic of letters is the Ulysses his bow, in which every man of wit or learning may try his strength. One who does not care to write a book without being sure of his abilities, may see by this means if his parts and talents are to the public taste.

This I take to be of great advantage to men of the best sense, who are always diffident of their private judgment, till it receives a sanction from the public. *Provoco ad populum*, I appeal to the people, was the usual saying of a very excellent dramatic poet, when he had any disputes with particular persons about the justness and regularity of his productions. It is but a melancholy comfort for an author to be satisfied that he has written up to the rules of art, when he finds he has no admirers in the world besides himself. Common modesty should, on this occasion, make a man suspect his own judgment, and that he misapplies the rules of his art, when he finds himself singular in the applause which he bestows upon his own writings.

The public is always even with an author who has not a just deference for them. The contempt is reciprocal. "I laugh at every one," said an old cynic, "who laughs at me." "Do you so?" replied the

philosopher; "then let me tell you, you live the merriest life of any man in Athens."

It is not therefore the least use of this my paper, that it gives a timorous writer, and such is every good one, an opportunity of putting his abilities to the proof, and of sounding the public, before he launches into it. For this reason I look upon my paper as a kind of nursery for authors, and question not but some, who have made a good figure here, will hereafter flourish under their own names in more long and elaborate works.

After having thus far enlarged upon this particular, I have one favour to beg of the candid and courteous reader, that when he meets with anything in this paper which may appear a little dull or heavy (though I hope this will not be often), he will believe it is the work of some other person, and not of Nestor Ironside.

I have, I know not how, been drawn in to tattle of myself, *more majorum*, almost the length of a whole *Guardian*; I shall therefore fill up the remaining part of it with what still relates to my own person and my correspondents. Now I would have them all know, that on the twentieth instant it is my intention to erect a lion's head in imitation of those I have described in Venice, through which all the private intelligence of that commonwealth is said to pass. This head is to open a most wide and voracious mouth, which shall take in such letters and papers as are conveyed to me by my correspondents, it being my resolution to have a particular regard to all such matters as come to my

hands through the mouth of the lion. There will be under it a box, of which the key will be in my own custody, to receive such papers as are dropped into it. Whatever the lion swallows, I shall digest for the use of the public. This head requires some time to finish, the workman being resolved to give it several masterly touches, and to represent it as ravenous as possible. It will be set up in Button's coffee-house in Covent Garden, who is directed to show the way to the lion's-head, and to instruct any young author how to convey his works into the mouth of it with safety and secrecy.

The Guardian, No. 98. Friday, July 3, 1713.

CLVI

Fireworks

Dum flammas Jovis, et sonitus imitatur Olympi.—VIRG.

I AM considering how most of the great phenomena or appearances in nature have been imitated by the art of man. Thunder is grown a common drug among the chymists. Lightning may be bought by the pound. If a man has occasion for a lambent flame, you have whole sheets of it in a handful of phosphor. Showers of rain are to be met with in every waterwork; and we are informed that some years ago the virtuosos of France covered a little vault with artificial snow, which they made to fall above an hour together for the entertainment of his present Majesty.

I am led into this train of thinking by the noble

firework that was exhibited last night upon the Thames. You might there see a little sky filled with innumerable blazing stars and meteors. Nothing could be more astonishing than the pillars of flame, clouds of smoke, and multitudes of stars, mingled together in such an agreeable confusion. Every rocket ended in a constellation, and strewed the air with such a shower of silver spangles, as opened and enlightened the whole scene from time to time. It put me in mind of the lines in Oedipus,

> Why from the bleeding womb of monstrous night
> Burst forth such myriads of abortive stars ?

In short, the artist did his part to admiration, and was so encompassed with fire and smoke, that one would have thought nothing but a salamander could have been safe in such a situation.

I was in company with two or three fanciful friends during this whole show. One of them being a critic, that is, a man who on all occasions is more attentive to what is wanting than what is present, begun to exert his talent upon the several objects we had before us. "I am mightily pleased," says he, "with that burning cipher. There is no matter in the world so proper to write with as wildfire, as no characters can be more legible than those which are read by their own light. But as for your cardinal virtues, I don't care for seeing them in such combustible figures. Who can imagine Chastity with a body of fire, or Temperance in a flame? Justice indeed may be

furnished out of this element, as far as her sword goes, and Courage may be all over one continued blaze, if the artist pleases."

Our companion observing that we laughed at this unseasonable severity, let drop the critic, and proposed a subject for a firework, which he thought would be very amusing, if executed by so able an artist as he who was at that time entertaining us. The plan he mentioned was a scene in Milton. He would have a large piece of machinery represent the Pandaemonium, where

> —From the arched roof
> Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
> Of starry lamps, and blazing cressets, fed
> With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light,
> As from a sky—

This might be finely represented by several illuminations disposed in a great frame of wood, with ten thousand beautiful exhalations of fire, which men versed in this art know very well how to raise. The evil spirits at the same time might very properly appear in vehicles of flame, and employ all the tricks of art to terrify and surprise the spectator.

We were well enough pleased with this start of thought, but fancied there was something in it too serious, and perhaps too horrid, to be put in execution.

Upon this, a friend of mine gave us an account of a firework described, if I am not mistaken, by Strada. A prince of Italy, it seems, entertained his mistress with it upon a great lake. In the midst of this lake was a huge floating mountain made by art. The mountain

represented Etna, being bored through the top with a monstrous orifice. Upon a signal given the eruption began. Fire and smoke, mixed with several unusual prodigies and figures, made their appearance for some time. On a sudden there was heard a most dreadful rumbling noise within the entrails of the machine. After which the mountain burst, and discovered a vast cavity in that side which faced the prince and his court. Within this hollow was Vulcan's shop full of fire and clockwork. A column of blue flames issued out incessantly from the forge. Vulcan was employed in hammering out thunderbolts, that every now and then flew up from the anvil with dreadful cracks and flashes. Venus stood by him in a figure of the brightest fire, with numberless Cupids on all sides of her, that shot out volleys of burning arrows. Before her was an altar with hearts of fire flaming on it. I have forgot several other particulars no less curious, and have only mentioned these to show that there may be a sort of fable or design in a firework, which may give an additional beauty to those surprising objects.

I seldom see anything that raises wonder in me, which does not give my thoughts a turn that makes my heart the better for it. As I was lying in my bed, and ruminating on what I had seen, I could not forbear reflecting on the insignificancy of human art, when set in comparison with the designs of Providence. In the pursuit of this thought I considered a comet, or, in the language of the vulgar, a blazing-star, as a sky-rocket discharged by an hand that is almighty. Many

of my readers saw that in the year 1680, and if they are not mathematicians, will be amazed to hear that it travelled in a much greater degree of swiftness than a cannon ball, and drew after it a tail of fire that was fourscore millions of miles in length. What an amazing thought is it to consider this stupendous body traversing the immensity of the creation with such a rapidity, and at the same time wheeling about in that line which the Almighty has prescribed for it! that it should move in such an inconceivable fury and combustion, and at the same time with such an exact regularity! How spacious must the universe be that gives such bodies as these their full play, without suffering the least disorder or confusion by it! What a glorious show are those beings entertained with, that can look into this great theatre of nature, and see myriads of such tremendous objects wandering through those immeasurable depths of ether, and running their appointed courses! Our eyes may hereafter be strong enough to command this magnificent prospect, and our understandings able to find out the several uses of these great parts of the universe. In the meantime they are very proper objects for our imaginations to contemplate, that we may form more exalted notions of infinite wisdom and power, and learn to think humbly of ourselves, and of all the little works of human invention.

The Guardian, No. 103. Thursday, July 9, 1713.

CLVII

The Latin Poets

Ingenium par materiae—JUV.

WHEN I read rules of criticism, I immediately inquire after the works of the author who has written them, and by that means discover what it is he likes in a composition; for there is no question but every man aims at least at what he thinks beautiful in others. If I find by his own manner of writing that he is heavy and tasteless, I throw aside his criticisms with a secret indignation, to see a man without genius or politeness dictating to the world on subjects which I find are above his reach.

If the critic has published nothing but rules and observations in criticism, I then consider whether there be a propriety and elegance in his thoughts and words, clearness and delicacy in his remarks, wit and good-breeding in his raillery; but if, in the place of all these, I find nothing but dogmatical stupidity, I must beg such a writer's pardon if I have no manner of deference for his judgment, and refuse to conform myself to his taste.

So Macer and Mundungus school the times,
And write in rugged prose the softer rules of rhymes.
Well do they play the careful critic's part,
Instructing doubly by their matchless art:
Rules for good verse they first with pains indite,
Then show us what are bad, by what they write.
MR. CONGREVE to SIR R. TEMPLE.

The greatest critics among the ancients are those who have the most excelled in all other kinds of composition, and have shown the height of good writing even in the precepts which they have given for it.

Among the moderns likewise, no critic has ever pleased, or been looked upon as authentic, who did not show by his practice that he was a master of the theory. I have now one before me, who after having given many proofs of his performances both in poetry and prose, obliged the world with several critical works. The author I mean is Strada. His prolusion on the style of the most famous among the ancient Latin poets who are extant, and have written in epic verse, is one of the most entertaining as well as the most just pieces of criticism that I have ever read. I shall make the plan of it the subject of this day's paper.

It is commonly known that Pope Leo the Tenth was a great patron of learning, and used to be present at the performances, conversations, and disputes of all the most polite writers of his time. Upon this bottom Strada founds the following narrative. When this pope was at his villa, that stood upon an eminence on the banks of the Tiber, the poets contrived the following pageant or machine for his entertainment. They made a huge floating mountain, that was split at the top in imitation of Parnassus. There were several marks on it that distinguished it for the habitation of heroic poets. Of all the Muses, Calliope only made her appearance. It was covered up and down with groves of laurel. Pegasus appeared hanging off the side of a

rock, with a fountain running from his heel. This floating Parnassus fell down the river to the sound of trumpets, and in a kind of epic measure, for it was rowed forward by six huge wheels, three on each side, that by their constant motion carried on the machine till it arrived before the pope's villa.

The representatives of the ancient poets were disposed in stations suitable to their respective characters. Statius was posted on the highest of the two summits, which was fashioned in the form of a precipice, and hung over the rest of the mountain in a dreadful manner, so that people regarded him with the same terror and curiosity as they look upon a daring rope-dancer, whom they expect to fall every moment.

Claudian was seated on the other summit, which was lower, and at the same time more smooth and even than the former. It was observed likewise to be more barren, and to produce on some spots of it plants that are unknown to Italy, and such as the gardeners call exotics.

Lucretius was very busy about the roots of the mountain, being wholly intent upon the motion and management of the machine, which was under his conduct, and was indeed of his invention. He was sometimes so engaged among the wheels, and covered with machinery, that not above half the poet appeared to the spectators, though at other times, by the working of the engines, he was raised up and became as conspicuous as any of the brotherhood.

Ovid did not settle in any particular place, but

ranged over all Parnassus with great nimbleness and activity. But as he did not much care for the toil and pains that were requisite to climb the upper part of the hill, he was generally roving about the bottom of it.

But there was none who was placed in a more eminent station, and had a greater prospect under him, than Lucan. He vaulted upon Pegasus with all the heat and intrepidity of youth, and seemed desirous of mounting into the clouds upon the back of him. But as the hinder feet of the horse stuck to the mountain while the body reared up in the air, the poet with great difficulty kept himself from sliding off his back, insomuch that the people often gave him for gone, and cried out every now and then that he was tumbling.

Virgil, with great modesty in his looks, was seated by Calliope in the midst of a plantation of laurels, which grew thick about him, and almost covered him with their shade. He would not perhaps have been seen in this retirement, but that it was impossible to look upon Calliope without seeing Virgil at the same time.

This poetical masquerade was no sooner arrived before the pope's villa, but they received an invitation to land, which they did accordingly. The hall prepared for their reception was filled with an audience of the greatest eminence for quality and politeness. The poets took their places, and repeated each of them a poem written in the style and spirit of those immortal authors whom they represented. The subjects of these several poems, with the judgment passed upon

each of them, may be an agreeable entertainment for another day's paper.

The Guardian, No. 115. Thursday, July 23, 1713.

CLVIII

The Latin Poets (continued)

—poetarum veniet manus, auxilio quae
Sit mihi— HOR.

THERE is nothing which more shows the want of taste and discernment in a writer, than the decrying of any author in gross, especially of an author who has been the admiration of multitudes, and that too in several ages of the world. This, however, is the general practice of all illiterate and undistinguishing critics. Because Homer and Virgil and Sophocles have been commended by the learned of all times, every scribbler, who has no relish of their beauties, gives himself an air of rapture when he speaks of them. But as he praises these he knows not why, there are others whom he depreciates with the same vehemence and upon the same account. We may see after what a different manner Strada proceeds in his judgment on the Latin poets; for I intend to publish in this paper a continuation of that Prolusion which was the subject of last Thursday. I shall therefore give my reader a short account, in prose, of every poem which was produced in the learned assembly there described; and if he is thoroughly conversant in the works of those ancient

authors, he will see with how much judgment every subject is adapted to the poet who makes use of it, and with how much delicacy every particular poet's way of writing is characterized in the censure that is passed upon it. Lucan's representative was the first who recited before the august assembly. As Lucan was a Spaniard, his poem does honour to that nation, which at the same time makes the romantic bravery in the hero of it more probable.

Alphonso was the governor of a town invested by the Moors. During the blockade they made his only son their prisoner, whom they brought before the walls, and exposed to his father's sight, threatening to put him to death if he did not immediately give up the town. The father tells them if he had an hundred sons, he would rather see them all perish than do an ill action, or betray his country. "But," says he, "if you take a pleasure in destroying the innocent, you may do it if you please: behold a sword for your purpose." Upon which he threw his sword from the wall, returned to his palace, and was able at such a juncture to sit down to the repast which was prepared for him. He was soon raised by the shouts of the enemy and the cries of the besieged. Upon returning again to the walls, he saw his son lying in the pangs of death; but far from betraying any weakness at such a spectacle, he upbraids his friends for their sorrow, and returns to finish his repast.

Upon the recital of this story, which is exquisitely drawn up in Lucan's spirit and language, the whole

assembly declared their opinion of Lucan in a confused murmur. The poem was praised or censured according to the prejudices which every one had conceived in favour or disadvantage of the author. These were so very great, that some had placed him in their opinions above the highest, and others beneath the lowest, of the Latin poets. Most of them however agreed, that Lucan's genius was wonderfully great, but at the same time too haughty and headstrong to be governed by art, and that his style was like his genius, learned, bold, and lively, but withal too tragical and blustering. In a word, that he chose rather a great than a just reputation; to which they added, that he was the first of the Latin poets who deviated from the purity of the Roman language.

The representative of Lucretius told the assembly, that they should soon be sensible of the difference between a poet who was a native of Rome, and a stranger who had been adopted into it: after which he entered upon his subject, which I find exhibited to my hand in a speculation of one of my predecessors.

Strada, in the person of Lucretius, gives an account of a chimerical correspondence between two friends by the help of a certain loadstone, which had such a virtue in it, that if it touched two several needles, when one of the needles so touched began to move, the other, though at never so great a distance, moved at the same time and in the same manner. He tells us that the two friends, being each of them possessed of one of these needles, made a kind of dial-plate, inscribing it

with the four-and-twenty letters, in the same manner as the hours of the day are marked upon the ordinary dial-plate. They then fixed one of the needles on each of these plates in such a manner that it could move round without impediment, so as to touch any of the four-and-twenty letters. Upon their separating from one another into distant countries, they agreed to withdraw themselves punctually into their closets at a certain hour of the day, and to converse with one another by means of this their invention. Accordingly when they were some hundred miles asunder, each of them shut himself up in his closet at the time appointed, and immediately cast his eye upon his dial-plate. If he had a mind to write anything to his friend, he directed his needle to every letter that formed the words which he had occasion for, making a little pause at the end of every word or sentence to avoid confusion. The friend, in the meanwhile, saw his own sympathetic needle moving of itself to every letter which that of his correspondent pointed at: by this means they talked together across a whole continent, and conveyed their thoughts to one another in an instant over cities or mountains, seas or deserts.

The whole audience were pleased with the artifice of the poet who represented Lucretius, observing very well how he had laid asleep their attention to the simplicity of his style in some verses, and to the want of harmony in others, by fixing their minds to the novelty of his subject, and to the experiment which he related. Without such an artifice they were of

opinion, that nothing would have sounded more harsh than Lucretius's diction and numbers. But it was plain that the more learned part of the assembly were quite of another mind. These allowed that it was peculiar to Lucretius above all other poets to be always doing or teaching something, that no other style was so proper to teach in, or gave a greater pleasure to those who had a true relish for the Roman tongue. They added further, that if Lucretius had not been embarrassed with the difficulty of his matter, and a little led away by an affectation of antiquity, there could not have been anything more perfect than his poem.

Claudian succeeded Lucretius, having chosen for his subject the famous contest between the nightingale and the lutanist, which every one is acquainted with, especially since Mr. Philips has so finely improved that hint in one of his pastorals.

He had no sooner finished, but the assembly rung with acclamations made in his praise. His first beauty, which every one owned, was the great clearness and perspicuity which appeared in the plan of his poem. Others were wonderfully charmed with the smoothness of his verse and the flowing of his numbers, in which there were none of those elisions and cuttings-off so frequent in the works of other poets. There were several, however, of a more refined judgment, who ridiculed that infusion of foreign phrases with which he had corrupted the Latin tongue, and spoke with contempt of the equability of his numbers, that cloyed

and satiated the ear for want of variety: to which they likewise added a frequent and unseasonable affectation of appearing sonorous and sublime.

The sequel of this prolusion shall be the work of another day.

The Guardian, No. 119. Tuesday, July 28, 1713.

CLIX

The Female Gamester

—Nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.—MILTON.

A Bit for the Lion.

"SIR—As soon as you have set up your unicorn, there is no question but the ladies will make him push very furiously at the men; for which reason I think it is good to be beforehand with them, and make the lion roar aloud at female irregularities. Among these, I wonder how their gaming has so long escaped your notice. You, who converse with the sober family of the Lizards, are perhaps a stranger to these viragos; but what would you say, should you see the Sparkler shaking her elbow for a whole night together, and thumping the table with a dice-box? Or how would you like to hear the good widow-lady herself returning to her house at midnight, and alarming the whole street with a most enormous rap, after having sat up till

that time at crimp or ombre? Sir, I am the husband of one of the female gamesters, and a great loser by it, both in my rest and my pocket. As my wife reads your papers, one upon this subject might be of use both to her, and your humble servant."

I should ill deserve the name of GUARDIAN, did I not caution all my fair wards against a practice which, when it runs to excess, is the most shameful but one that the female world can fall into. The ill consequences of it are more than can be contained in this paper. However, that I may proceed in method, I shall consider them, first as they relate to the mind; secondly, as they relate to the body.

Could we look into the mind of a female gamester, we should see it full of nothing but *trumps* and *mattadores*. Her slumbers are haunted with kings, queens, and knaves. The day lies heavy upon her till the play-season returns, when, for half a dozen hours together, all her faculties are employed in shuffling, cutting, dealing, and sorting out a pack of cards, and no ideas to be discovered in a soul which calls itself rational, excepting little square figures of painted and spotted paper. Was the understanding, that divine part in our composition, given for such an use? Is it thus that we improve the greatest talent human nature is endowed with? What would a superior being think, were he shown this intellectual faculty in a female gamester, and at the same time told that it was by this she was distinguished from brutes, and allied to angels?

When our women thus fill their imaginations with

PRESENTED TO ST MARY'S COLLEGE BY

pips and counters, I cannot wonder at the story I have lately heard of a new-born child that was marked with the five of clubs.

Their passions suffer no less by this practice than their understandings and imaginations. What hope and fear, joy and anger, sorrow and discontent, break out all at once in a fair assembly upon so noble an occasion as that of turning up a card! Who can consider without a secret indignation, that all those affections of the mind which should be consecrated to their children, husbands, and parents, are thus vilely prostituted and thrown away upon a hand at loo? For my own part, I cannot but be grieved when I see a fine woman fretting and bleeding inwardly from such trivial motives; when I behold the face of an angel agitated and discomposed by the heart of a fury.

Our minds are of such a make, that they naturally give themselves up to every diversion which they are much accustomed to, and we always find that play, when followed with assiduity, engrosses the whole woman. She quickly grows uneasy in her own family, takes but little pleasure in all the domestic innocent endearments of life, and grows more fond of *Pam* than of her husband. My friend Theophrastus, the best of husbands and of fathers, has often complained to me, with tears in his eyes, of the late hours he is forced to keep if he would enjoy his wife's conversation. "When she returns to me with joy in her face, it does not arise," says he, "from the sight of her husband, but

from the good luck she has had at cards. On the contrary," says he, "if she has been a loser, I am doubly a sufferer by it. She comes home out of humour, is angry with everybody, displeased with all I can do or say, and in reality for no other reason, but because she has been throwing away my estate." What charming bedfellows and companions for life are men likely to meet with, that choose their wives out of such women of vogue and fashion! What a race of worthies, what patriots, what heroes, must we expect from mothers of this make!

I come, in the next place, to consider the ill consequences which gaming has on the bodies of our female adventurers. It is so ordered, that almost everything which corrupts the soul, decays the body. The beauties of the face and mind are generally destroyed by the same means. This consideration should have a particular weight with the female world, who were designed to please the eye and attract the regards of the other half of the species. Now there is nothing that wears out a fine face like the vigils of the card-table, and those cutting passions which naturally attend them. Hollow eyes, haggard looks, and pale complexions, are the natural indications of a female gamester. Her morning sleeps are not able to repair her midnight watchings. I have known a woman carried off half dead from bassette, and have many a time grieved to see a person of quality gliding by me in her chair at two o'clock in the morning, and looking like a spectre amidst a glare of flambeaux. In short, I never knew a

thorough-paced female gamester hold her beauty two winters together.

But there is still another case in which the body is more endangered than in the former. All play-debts must be paid in specie or by an equivalent. The man that plays beyond his income pawns his estate; the woman must find out something else to mortgage when her pin-money is gone: the husband has his lands to dispose of, the wife her person. Now, when the female body is once *dipped*, if the creditor be very importunate, I leave my reader to consider the consequences.

The Guardian, No. 120. Wednesday, July 29, 1713.

CLX

The Latin Poets (*concluded*)

Nec magis expressi vultus per ahenea signa.—HOR.

THAT I may get out of debt with the public as fast as I can, I shall here give them the remaining part of Strada's criticism on the Latin heroic poets. My readers may see the whole work in the three papers numbered 115, 119, 122. Those who are acquainted with the authors themselves, cannot but be pleased to see them so justly represented; and as for those who have never perused the originals, they may form a judgment of them from such accurate and entertaining copies. The whole piece will show at least how a man

of genius (and none else should call himself a critic) can make the driest art a pleasing amusement.

The Sequel of Strada's Prolusion

The poet who personated Ovid gives an account of the chryso-magnet, or of the loadstone which attracts gold, after the same manner as the common loadstone attracts iron. The author, that he might express Ovid's way of thinking, derives this virtue to the chryso-magnet from a poetical metamorphosis.

"As I was sitting by a well," says he, "when I was a boy, my ring dropped into it, when immediately my father, fastening a certain stone to the end of a line, let it down into the well. It no sooner touched the surface of the water, but the ring leaped up from the bottom, and clung to it in such a manner, that he drew it out like a fish. My father, seeing me wonder at the experiment, gave me the following account of it. When Deucalion and Pyrrha went about the world to repair mankind by throwing stones over their heads, the men who rose from them differed in their inclinations, according to the places on which the stones fell. Those which fell in the fields became ploughmen and shepherds. Those which fell into the water produced sailors and fishermen. Those that fell among the woods and forests gave birth to huntsmen. Among the rest there were several that fell upon mountains that had mines of gold and silver in them. This last race of men immediately betook themselves to the search of these precious metals; but nature, being displeased to see

herself ransacked, withdrew these her treasures towards the centre of the earth. The avarice of man, however, persisted in its former pursuits, and ransacked her inmost bowels in quest of the riches which they contained. Nature, seeing herself thus plundered by a swarm of miners, was so highly incensed, that she shook the whole place with an earthquake, and buried the men under their own works. The Stygian flames, which lay in the neighbourhood of these deep mines, broke out at the same time with great fury, burning up the whole mass of human limbs and earth, till they were hardened and baked into stone. The human bodies that were delving in iron mines were converted into those common loadstones which attract that metal. Those which were in search of gold became chryso-magnets, and still keep their former avarice in their present state of petrifaction."

Ovid had no sooner given over speaking, but the assembly pronounced their opinions of him. Several were so taken with his easy way of writing, and had so formed their tastes upon it, that they had no relish for any composition which was not framed in the Ovidian manner. A great many, however, were of a contrary opinion, till at length it was determined by a plurality of voices, that Ovid highly deserved the name of a witty man, but that his language was vulgar and trivial, and of the nature of those things which cost no labour in the invention, but are ready found out to a man's hand. In the last place they all agreed, that the greatest objection which lay against Ovid,

both as to his life and writings, was his having too much wit, and that he would have succeeded better in both, had he rather checked than indulged it. Statius stood up next with a swelling and haughty air, and made the following story the subject of his poem.

A German and a Portuguese, when Vienna was besieged, having had frequent contests of rivalry, were preparing for a single duel, when on a sudden the walls were attacked by the enemy. Upon this, both the German and Portuguese consented to sacrifice their private resentments to the public, and to see who could signalize himself most upon the common foe. Each of them did wonders in repelling the enemy from different parts of the wall. The German was at length engaged amidst a whole army of Turks, till his left arm, that held the shield, was unfortunately lopped off, and he himself so stunned with a blow he had received, that he fell down as dead. The Portuguese, seeing the condition of his rival, very generously flew to his succour, dispersed the multitudes that were gathered about him, and fought over him as he lay upon the ground. In the meanwhile the German recovered from his trance, and rose up to the assistance of the Portuguese, who a little after had his right arm, which held his sword, cut off by the blow of a sabre. He would have lost his life at the same time by a spear which was aimed at his back, had not the German slain the person who was aiming at him. These two competitors for fame, having received such mutual obligations, now fought in conjunction, and as

the one was only able to manage the sword, and the other the shield, made up but one warrior betwixt them. The Portuguese covered the German, while the German dealt destruction among the enemy. At length, finding themselves faint with loss of blood, and resolving to perish nobly, they advanced to the most shattered part of the wall, and threw themselves down, with a huge fragment of it, upon the heads of the besiegers.

When Statius ceased, the old factions immediately broke out concerning his manner of writing. Some gave him very loud acclamations, such as he had received in his lifetime, declaring him the only man who had written in a style which was truly heroical, and that he was above all others in his fame as well as in his diction. Others censured him as one who went beyond all bounds in his images and expressions, laughing at the cruelty of his conceptions, the rumbling of his numbers, and the dreadful pomp and bombast of his expressions. There were, however, a few select judges, who moderated between both these extremes, and pronounced upon Statius, that there appeared in his style much poetical heat and fire, but withal so much smoke as sullied the brightness of it: that there was a majesty in his verse, but that it was the majesty rather of a tyrant than of a king: that he was often towering among the clouds, but often met with the fate of Icarus: in a word, that Statius was among the poets what Alexander the Great is among heroes, a man of great virtues and of great faults.

Virgil was the last of the ancient poets who produced

himself upon this occasion. His subject was the story of Theutilla, which being so near that of Judith in all its circumstances, and at the same time translated by a very ingenious gentleman in one of Mr. Dryden's miscellanies, I shall here give no farther account of it. When he had done, the whole assembly declared the works of this great poet a subject rather for their admiration than for their applause, and that if anything was wanting in Virgil's poetry, it was to be ascribed to a deficiency in the art itself, and not in the genius of this great man. There were, however, some envious murmurs and detractions heard among the crowd, as if there were very frequently verses in him which flagged or wanted spirit, and were rather to be looked upon as faultless than beautiful. But these injudicious censures were heard with a general indignation.

I need not observe to my learned reader, that the foregoing story of the German and Portuguese is almost the same in every particular with that of the two rival soldiers in Caesar's commentaries. This prolusion ends with the performance of an Italian poet, full of those little witticisms and conceits which have infected the greatest part of modern poetry.

The Guardian, No. 122. Friday, July 31, 1713.

CLXI

A Country Bill of Mortality

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua ditis.—VIRG.

SOME of our quaint moralists have pleased themselves with an observation, that there is but one way of coming into the world, but a thousand to go out of it. I have seen a fanciful dream written by a Spaniard, in which he introduces the person of death metamorphosing himself, like another Proteus, into innumerable shapes and figures. To represent the fatality of fevers and agues, with many other distempers and accidents that destroy the life of man, death enters first of all in a body of fire; a little after he appears like a man of snow, then rolls about the room like a cannon ball, then lies on the table like a gilded pill; after this he transforms himself, of a sudden, into a sword, then dwindles successively to a dagger, to a bodkin, to a crooked pin, to a needle, to a hair. The Spaniard's design, by this allegory, was to show the many assaults to which the life of man is exposed, and to let his reader see that there was scarce anything in nature so very mean and inconsiderable, but that it was able to overcome him and lay his head in the dust. I remember Monsieur Paschal, in his reflections on Providence, has this observation upon Cromwell's death. "That usurper," says he, "who had destroyed the royal family in his own nation, who had made all the princes

of Europe tremble, and struck a terror into Rome itself, was at last taken out of the world by a fit of the gravel. An atom, a grain of sand," says he, "that would have been of no significancy in any other part of the universe, being lodged in such a particular place, was an instrument of Providence to bring about the most happy revolution, and to remove from the face of the earth this troubler of mankind." In short, swarms of distempers are everywhere hovering over us; casualties, whether at home or abroad, whether we wake or sleep, sit or walk, are planted about us in ambuscade; every element, every climate, every season, all nature is full of death.

There are more casualties incident to men than women, as battles, sea-voyages, with several dangerous trades and professions that often prove fatal to the practitioners. I have seen a treatise written by a learned physician on the distempers peculiar to those who work in stone or marble. It has been therefore observed by curious men, that upon a strict examination there are more males brought into the world than females. Providence, to supply this waste in the species, has made allowances for it by a suitable redundancy in the male sex. Those who have made the nicest calculations have found, I think, that, taking one year with another, there are about twenty boys produced to nineteen girls. This observation is so well grounded, that I will at any time lay five to four, that there appear more male than female infants in every weekly bill of mortality. And what can be a

more demonstrative argument for the superintendency of Providence?

There are casualties incident to every particular station and way of life. A friend of mine was once saying, that he fancied there would be something new and diverting in a country bill of mortality. Upon communicating this hint to a gentleman who was then going down to his seat, which lies at a considerable distance from London, he told me he would make a collection, as well as he could, of the several deaths that had happened in his country for the space of a whole year, and send them up to me in the form of such a bill as I mentioned. The reader will here see that he has been as good as his promise. To make it the more entertaining, he has set down, among the real distempers, some imaginary ones, to which the country people ascribed the deaths of some of their neighbours. I shall extract out of them such only as seem almost peculiar to the country, laying aside fevers, apoplexies, smallpox, and the like, which they have in common with towns and cities.

Of a six-bar gate, fox-hunters	4
Of a quickset hedge	2
Two duels, viz:	
First, between a frying-pan and a pitchfork	1
Second, between a joint-stool and a brown jug	1
Bewitched	13
Of an evil tongue	9
Crossed in love	7

Broke his neck in robbing a henroost	1
Cut finger turned to a gangrene by an old gentlewoman of the parish	1
Surfeit of curds and cream	2
Took cold sleeping at church	11
Of a sprain in his shoulder, by saving his dog at a bull-baiting	1
Lady B——'s cordial water	2
Knocked down by a quart bottle	1
Frighted out of his wits by a headless dog with saucer eyes	1
Of October[1]	25
Broke a vein in bawling for a knight of the shire	1
Old women drowned upon trial of witchcraft	3
Climbing a crow's nest	2
Chalk and green apples	4
Led into a horse-pond by a Will of the Wisp	1
Died of a fright in an exercise of the trained bands	1
Over-eat himself at a house-warming	1
By the parson's bull	2
Vagrant beggars worried by the Squire's house-dog	2
Shot by mistake	1
Of a mountebank doctor	6
Of the Merry Andrew	1
Caught her death in a wet ditch	1
Old age	100
Foul distemper	0

The Guardian, No. 136. Monday, August 17, 1713.

[1] That is, ale brewed in October.

CLXII

Family Pride

—sanctus haberi
Justitiaeque tenax, factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem— JUV.

HORACE, Juvenal, Boileau, and indeed the greatest writers in almost every age, have exposed, with all the strength of wit and good sense, the vanity of a man's valuing himself upon his ancestors, and endeavoured to show that true nobility consists in virtue, not in birth. With submission, however, to so many great authorities, I think they have pushed this matter a little too far. We ought in gratitude to honour the posterity of those who have raised either the interest or reputation of their country, and by whose labours we ourselves are more happy, wise, or virtuous than we should have been without them. Besides, naturally speaking, a man bids fairer for greatness of soul, who is the descendant of worthy ancestors, and has good blood in his veins, than one who is come of an ignoble and obscure parentage. For these reasons I think a man of merit, who is derived from an illustrious line, is very justly to be regarded more than a man of equal merit, who has no claim to hereditary honours. Nay, I think those who are indifferent in themselves, and have nothing else to distinguish them but the virtues of their forefathers, are to be looked upon with a degree of veneration even upon that account, and to be more respected

than the common run of men who are of low and vulgar extraction.

After having thus ascribed due honours to birth and parentage, I must however take notice of those who arrogate to themselves more honours than are due to them on this account. The first are such who are not enough sensible that vice and ignorance taint the blood, and that an unworthy behaviour degrades and disennobles a man in the eye of the world, as much as birth and family aggrandize and exalt him.

The second are those who believe a *new* man of an elevated merit is not more to be honoured than an insignificant and worthless man who is descended from a long line of patriots and heroes: or, in other words, behold with contempt a person who is such a man as the first founder of their family was, upon whose reputation they value themselves.

But I shall chiefly apply myself to those whose quality sits uppermost in all their discourses and behaviour. An empty man of a great family is a creature that is scarce conversable. You read his ancestry in his smile, in his air, in his eyebrow. He has indeed nothing but his nobility to give employment to his thoughts. Rank and precedency are the important points which he is always discussing within himself. A gentleman of this turn begun a speech in one of King Charles's parliaments: "Sir, I had the honour to be born at a time——" upon which a rough honest gentleman took him up short, "I would fain know what

that gentleman means: is there any one in this house that has not had the honour to be born as well as himself?" The good sense which reigns in our nation has pretty well destroyed this starched behaviour among men who have seen the world, and know that every gentleman will be treated upon a foot of equality. But there are many who have had their education among women, dependants, or flatterers, that lose all the respect which would otherwise be paid them, by being too assiduous in procuring it.

My Lord Froth has been so educated in punctilio, that he governs himself by a ceremonial in all the ordinary occurrences of life. He measures out his bow to the degree of the person he converses with. I have seen him in every inclination of the body, from a familiar nod to the low stoop in the salutation-sign. I remember five of us, who were acquainted with one another, met together one morning at his lodgings, when a wag of the company was saying, it would be worth while to observe how he would distinguish us at his first entrance. Accordingly he no sooner came into the room, but casting his eye about, "My Lord such a one," says he, "your most humble servant. Sir Richard, your humble servant. Your servant, Mr. Ironside. Mr. Ducker, how do you do? Hah! Frank, are you there?"

There is nothing more easy than to discover a man whose heart is full of his family. Weak minds that have imbibed a strong tincture of the nursery, younger brothers that have been brought up to nothing, super-

annuated retainers to a great house, have generally their thoughts taken up with little else.

I had some years ago an aunt of my own, by name Mrs. Martha Ironside, who would never marry beneath herself, and is supposed to have died a maid in the fourscorth year of her age. She was the chronicle of our family, and passed away the greatest part of the last forty years of her life in recounting the antiquity, marriages, exploits, and alliances of the Ironsides. Mrs. Martha conversed generally with a knot of old virgins, who were likewise of good families, and had been very cruel all the beginning of the last century. They were every one of them as proud as Lucifer, but said their prayers twice a day, and in all other respects were the best women in the world. If they saw a fine petticoat at church, they immediately took to pieces the pedigree of her that wore it, and would lift up their eyes to heaven at the confidence of the saucy minx, when they found she was an honest tradesman's daughter. It is impossible to describe the pious indignation that would rise in them at the sight of a man who lived plentifully on an estate of his own getting. They were transported with zeal beyond measure, if they heard of a young woman's matching into a great family upon account only of her beauty, her merit, or her money. In short, there was not a female within ten miles of them that was in possession of a gold watch, a pearl necklace, or a piece of Mechlin lace, but they examined her title to it. My aunt Martha used to chide me very frequently for not

sufficiently valuing myself. She would not eat a bit all dinner-time, if at an invitation she found she had been seated below herself; and would frown upon me for an hour together, if she saw me give place to any man under a baronet. As I was once talking to her of a wealthy citizen whom she had refused in her youth, she declared to me with great warmth, that she preferred a man of quality in his shirt to the richest man upon the 'change in a coach and six. She pretended that our family was nearly related by the mother's side to half a dozen peers; but as none of them knew anything of the matter, we always kept it as a secret among ourselves. A little before her death she was reciting to me the history of my forefathers; but dwelling a little longer than ordinary upon the actions of Sir Gilbert Ironside, who had a horse shot under him at Edgehill fight, I gave an unfortunate *pish!* and asked, "What was all this to me?" upon which she retired to her closet, and fell a-scribbling for three hours together, in which time, as I afterwards found, she struck me out of her will, and left all she had to my sister Margaret, a wheedling baggage, that used to be asking questions about her great-grandfather from morning to night. She now lies buried among the family of the Ironsides, with a stone over her, acquainting the reader that she died at the age of eighty years, a spinster, and that she was descended of the ancient family of the Ironsides. After which follows the genealogy drawn up by her own hand.

The Guardian, No. 137. Tuesday, August 18, 1713.

CLXIII

Androcles and the Lion

—prisca fides facto, sed fama perennis.—VIRG.

"MOST VENERABLE NESTOR—I find that everybody is very much delighted with the voice of your lion. His roarings against the tucker have been most melodious and emphatical. It is to be hoped that the ladies will take warning by them, and not provoke him to greater outrages; for I observe that your lion, as you yourself have told us, is made up of mouth and paws. For my own part, I have long considered with myself how I might express my gratitude to this noble animal, that has so much the good of our country at his heart. After many thoughts on this subject, I have at length resolved to do honour to him by compiling a history of his species, and extracting out of all authors whatever may redound to his reputation. In the prosecution of this design I shall have no manner of regard to what Æsop has said upon the subject, whom I look upon to have been a republican, by the unworthy treatment which he often gives to the king of beasts, and whom, if I had time, I could convict of falsehood and forgery in almost every matter of fact which he has related of this generous animal. Your romance writers are likewise a set of men whose authority I shall build upon very little in this case. They all of them are born with a particular antipathy to lions, and give

them no more quarter than they do giants, wherever they chance to meet them. There is not one of the seven champions but, when he has nothing else to do, encounters with a lion, and you may be sure always gets the better of him. In short, a knight-errant lives in a perpetual state of enmity with this noble creature, and hates him more than all things upon the earth, except a dragon. Had the stories recorded of them by these writers been true, the whole species would have been destroyed before now. After having now renounced all fabulous authorities, I shall begin my memoirs of the lion with a story related of him by Aulus Gellius, and extracted by him out of Dion Cassius, an historian of undoubted veracity. It is the famous story of Androcles the Roman slave, which I premise for the sake of my learned reader, who needs go no further in it if he has read it already.

"Androcles was the slave of a noble Roman who was proconsul of Afric. He had been guilty of a fault, for which his master would have put him to death, had not he found an opportunity to escape out of his hands, and fled into the deserts of Numidia. As he was wandering among the barren sands, and almost dead with heat and hunger, he saw a cave in the side of a rock. He went into it, and finding at the farther end of it a place to sit down upon, rested there for some time. At length, to his great surprise, a huge overgrown lion entered at the mouth of the cave, and seeing a man at the upper end of it, immediately made towards him. Androcles gave himself for gone; but

the lion, instead of treating him as he expected, laid his paw upon his lap, and with a complaining kind of voice fell a-licking his hand. Androcles, after having recovered himself a little from the fright he was in, observed the lion's paw to be exceedingly swelled by a large thorn that stuck in it. He immediately pulled it out, and by squeezing the paw very gently, made a great deal of corrupt matter run out of it, which probably freed the lion from the great anguish he had felt some time before. The lion left him upon receiving this good office from him, and soon after returned with a fawn which he had just killed. This he laid down at the feet of his benefactor, and went off again in pursuit of his prey. Androcles, after having sodden the flesh of it by the sun, subsisted upon it till the lion had supplied him with another. He lived many days in this frightful solitude, the lion catering for him with great assiduity. Being tired at length of this savage society, he was resolved to deliver himself up into his master's hands, and suffer the worst effects of his displeasure, rather than be thus driven out from mankind. His master, as was customary for the proconsuls of Afric, was at that time getting together a present of all the largest lions that could be found in the country, in order to send them to Rome, that they might furnish out a show to the Roman people. Upon his poor slave's surrendering himself into his hands, he ordered him to be carried away to Rome as soon as the lions were in readiness to be sent, and that for his crime he should be exposed to fight with one of the

lions in the amphitheatre, as usual, for the diversion of the people. This was all performed accordingly. Androcles, after such a strange run of fortune, was now in the area of the theatre amidst thousands of spectators, expecting every moment when his antagonist would come out upon him. At length a huge monstrous lion leaped out from the place where he had been kept hungry for the show. He advanced with great rage towards the man, but on a sudden, after having regarded him a little wistfully, fell to the ground, and crept towards his feet with all the signs of blandishment and caress. Androcles, after a short pause, discovered that it was his old Numidian friend, and immediately renewed his acquaintance with him. Their mutual congratulations were very surprising to the beholders, who, upon hearing an account of the whole matter from Androcles, ordered him to be pardoned, and the lion to be given up into his possession. Androcles returned, at Rome, the civilities which he had received from him in the deserts of Afric. Dion Cassius says that he himself saw the man leading the lion about the streets of Rome, the people everywhere gathering about them, and repeating to one another, *Hic est leo hospes hominis, hic est homo medicus leonis.* 'This is the lion who was the man's host; this is the man who was the lion's physician.'"

The Guardian, No. 139. Thursday, August 20, 1713.

CLXIV

The Human Ant-hill

Admiranda tibi levium spectacula rerum.—VIRG.

THERE is no passion which steals into the heart more imperceptibly, and covers itself under more disguises, than pride. For my own part, I think, if there is any passion or vice which I am wholly a stranger to, it is this; though at the same time, perhaps, this very judgment which I form of myself proceeds in some measure from this corrupt principle.

I have been always wonderfully delighted with that sentence in Holy Writ, "Pride was not made for man." There is not indeed any single view of human nature, under its present condition, which is not sufficient to extinguish in us all the secret seeds of pride; and, on the contrary, to sink the soul into the lowest state of humility, and what the schoolmen call self-annihilation. Pride was not made for man, as he is,

1. A sinful,
2. An ignorant,
3. A miserable being.

There is nothing in his understanding, in his will, or in his present condition, that can tempt any considerate creature to pride or vanity.

These three very reasons why he should not be proud are, notwithstanding, the reasons why he is so. Were not he a sinful creature, he would not be subject

to a passion which rises from the depravity of his nature; were he not an ignorant creature, he would see that he has nothing to be proud of; and were not the whole species miserable, he would not have those wretched objects of comparison before his eyes, which are the occasions of this passion, and which make one man value himself more than another.

A wise man will be contented that his glory be deferred till such time as he shall be truly glorified; when his understanding shall be cleared, his will rectified, and his happiness assured; or, in other words, when he shall be neither sinful, nor ignorant, nor miserable.

If there be anything which makes human nature appear ridiculous to beings of superior faculties, it must be pride. They know so well the vanity of those imaginary perfections that swell the heart of man, and of those little supernumerary advantages, whether in birth, fortune, or title, which one man enjoys above another, that it must certainly very much astonish, if it does not very much divert them, when they see a mortal puffed up, and valuing himself above his neighbours on any of these accounts, at the same time that he is obnoxious to all the common calamities of the species.

To set this thought in its true light, we will fancy, if you please, that yonder mole-hill is inhabited by reasonable creatures, and that every pismire (his shape and way of life only excepted) is endowed with human passions. How should we smile to hear one

give us an account of the pedigrees, distinctions, and titles that reign among them! Observe how the whole swarm divide and make way for the pismire that passes through them. You must understand he is an emmet of quality, and has better blood in his veins than any pismire in the mole-hill. Don't you see how sensible he is of it, how slow he marches forward, how the whole rabble of ants keep their distance? Here you may observe one placed upon a little eminence, and looking down on a long row of labourers. He is the richest insect on this side the hillock, he has a walk of half a yard in length, and a quarter of an inch in breadth; he keeps a hundred menial servants, and has at least fifteen barley-corns in his granary. He is now chiding and beslaving the emmet that stands before him, and who, for all that we can discover, is as good an emmet as himself.

But here comes an insect of figure! Don't you take notice of a little white straw that he carries in his mouth? That straw, you must understand, he would not part with for the longest tract about the mole-hill: did you but know what he has undergone to purchase it! See how the ants of all qualities and conditions swarm about him. Should this straw drop out of his mouth, you would see all this numerous circle of attendants follow the next that took it up, and leave the discarded insect, or run over his back, to come at his successor.

If now you have a mind to see all the ladies of the mole-hill, observe first the pismire that listens to the

emmet on her left hand, at the same time that she seems to turn away her head from him. He tells this poor insect that she is a goddess, that her eyes are brighter than the sun, that life and death are at her disposal. She believes him, and gives herself a thousand little airs upon it. Mark the vanity of the pismire on your left hand. She can scarce crawl with age, but you must know she values herself upon her birth; and if you mind, spurns at every one that comes within her reach. The little nimble coquette that is running along by the side of her, is a wit. She has broke many a pismire's heart. Do but observe what a drove of lovers are running after her.

We will here finish this imaginary scene; but first of all, to draw the parallel closer, will suppose, if you please, that death comes down upon the mole-hill in the shape of a cock-sparrow, who picks up, without distinction, the pismire of quality and his flatterers, the pismire of substance and his day-labourers, the white-straw officer and his sycophants, with all the goddesses, wits, and beauties of the mole-hill.

May we not imagine that beings of superior natures and perfections regard all the instances of pride and vanity among our own species in the same kind of view, when they take a survey of those who inhabit the earth; or, in the language of an ingenious French poet, of those pismires that people this heap of dirt, which human vanity has divided into climates and regions?

The Guardian, No. 153. Saturday, September 5, 1713.

CLXV

Day Dreams of an Alchemist

—Aliquisque malo fuit usus in illo.—Ov. *Met.*

CHARITY is a virtue of the heart, and not of the hands, says an old writer. Gifts and alms are the expressions, not the essence, of this virtue. A man may bestow great sums on the poor and indigent without being charitable, and may be charitable when he is not able to bestow anything. Charity is therefore a habit of goodwill or benevolence in the soul, which disposes us to the love, assistance, and relief of mankind, especially of those who stand in need of it. The poor man who has this excellent frame of mind, is no less entitled to the reward of this virtue than the man who founds a college. For my own part, I am charitable to an extravagance this way. I never saw an indigent person in my life, without reaching out to him some of this imaginary relief. I cannot but sympathize with every one I meet that is in affliction; and if my abilities were equal to my wishes, there should be neither pain nor poverty in the world.

To give my reader a right notion of myself in this particular, I shall present him with the secret history of one of the most remarkable parts of my life.

I was once engaged in search of the philosopher's stone. It is frequently observed of men who have been busied in this pursuit, that though they have

failed in their principal design, they have however made such discoveries in their way to it, as have sufficiently recompensed their inquiries. In the same manner, though I cannot boast of my success in that affair, I do not repent of my engaging in it, because it produced in my mind such an habitual exercise of charity, as made it much better than perhaps it would have been, had I never been lost in so pleasing a delusion.

As I did not question but I should soon have a new Indies in my possession, I was perpetually taken up in considering how to turn it to the benefit of mankind. In order to it I employed a whole day in walking about this great city, to find out proper places for the erection of hospitals. I had likewise entertained that project, which has since succeeded in another place, of building churches at the court end of the town, with this only difference, that instead of fifty, I intended to have built a hundred, and to have seen them all finished in less than one year.

I had, with great pains and application, got together a list of all the French Protestants; and by the best accounts I could come at, had calculated the value of all those estates and effects which every one of them had left in his own country for the sake of his religion, being fully determined to make it up to him, and return some of them the double of what they had lost.

As I was one day in my laboratory, my operator, who was to fill my coffers for me, and used to foot it from the other end of the town every morning, com-

plained of a sprain in his leg, that he had met with over against St. Clement's church. This so affected me, that, as a standing mark of my gratitude to him, and out of compassion to the rest of my fellow-citizens, I resolved to new pave every street within the liberties, and entered a memorandum in my pocket-book accordingly. About the same time I entertained some thoughts of mending all the highways on this side the Tweed, and of making all the rivers in England navigable.

But the project I had most at heart was the settling upon every man in Great Britain three pounds a year (in which sum may be comprised, according to Sir William Pettit's observations, all the necessities of life), leaving to them whatever else they could get by their own industry to lay out on superfluities.

I was above a week debating in myself what I should do in the matter of impropriations; but at length came to a resolution to buy them all up, and restore them to the church.

As I was one day walking near St. Paul's, I took some time to survey that structure, and not being entirely satisfied with it, though I could not tell why, I had some thoughts of pulling it down, and building it up anew at my own expense.

For my own part, as I have no pride in me, I intended to take up with a coach and six, half a dozen footmen, and live like a private gentleman.

It happened about this time that public matters looked very gloomy, taxes came hard, the war went on

heavily, people complained of the great burdens that were laid upon them: this made me resolve to set aside one morning to consider seriously the state of the nation. I was the more ready to enter on it, because I was obliged, whether I would or no, to sit at home in my morning gown, having, after a most incredible expense, pawned a new suit of clothes and a full-bottomed wig for a sum of money, which my operator assured me was the last he should want to bring all matters to bear.

After having considered many projects, I at length resolved to beat the common enemy at his own weapons, and laid a scheme which would have blown him up in a quarter of a year, had things succeeded to my wishes. As I was in this golden dream, somebody knocked at my door. I opened it, and found it was a messenger that brought me a letter from the laboratory. The fellow looked so miserably poor, that I was resolved to make his fortune before he delivered his message; but seeing he brought a letter from my operator, I concluded I was bound to it in honour, as much as a prince is to give a reward to one that brings him the first news of a victory. I knew this was the long-expected hour of projection, and which I had waited for, with great impatience, above half a year before. In short, I broke open my letter in a transport of joy, and found it as follows:

"SIR—After having got out of you everything you can conveniently spare, I scorn to trespass upon your

generous nature, and therefore must ingenuously confess to you, that I know no more of the philosopher's stone than you do. I shall only tell you for your comfort, that I never yet could bubble a blockhead out of his money. They must be men of wit and parts who are for my purpose. This made me apply myself to a person of your wealth and ingenuity. How I have succeeded, you yourself can best tell.—Your humble servant to command, THOMAS WHITE.

"I have locked up the laboratory, and laid the key under the door."

I was very much shocked at the unworthy treatment of this man, and not a little mortified at my disappointment, though not so much for what I myself, as what the public, suffered by it. I think however I ought to let the world know what I designed for them, and hope that such of my readers who find they had a share in my good intentions, will accept of the will for the deed.

The Guardian, No. 166. Monday, September 21, 1713.

CLXVI

The Female Passion for China

—Magis illa placent quae pluris emuntur.

I HAVE lately been very much teased with the thought of Mrs. Anne Page, and the memory of those many cruelties which I suffered from that obdurate fair one.

Mrs. Anne was, in a particular manner, very fond of china ware, against which I had, unfortunately, declared my aversion. I do not know but this was the first occasion of her coldness towards me, which makes me sick at the very sight of a china dish ever since. This is the best introduction I can make for my present discourse, which may serve to fill up a gap, till I am more at leisure to resume the thread of my amours.

There are no inclinations in women which more surprise me than their passions for chalk and china. The first of these maladies wears out in a little time; but when a woman is visited with the second, it generally takes possession of her for life. China vessels are playthings for women of all ages. An old lady of fourscore shall be as busy in cleaning an Indian mandarin, as her great-grand-daughter is in dressing her baby.

The common way of purchasing such trifles, if I may believe my female informers, is by exchanging old suits of clothes for this brittle ware. The potters of China have, it seems, their factors at this distance, who retail out their several manufactures for cast clothes and superannuated garments. I have known an old petticoat metamorphosed into a punch-bowl, and a pair of breeches into a teapot. For this reason my friend Tradewell in the city calls his great room, that is nobly furnished out with china, his wife's wardrobe. "In yonder corner," says he, "are above twenty suits of clothes, and on that scrutoire above a hundred yards of furbelowed silk. You cannot imagine

how many nightgowns, stays, and mantuas, went to the raising of that pyramid. The worst of it is," says he, "a suit of clothes is not suffered to last half its time, that it may be the more vendible; so that in reality this is but a more dexterous way of picking the husband's pocket, who is often purchasing a great vase of china, when he fancies that he is buying a fine head or a silk gown for his wife." There is, likewise, another inconvenience in this female passion for china, namely, that it administers to them great matter of wrath and sorrow. How much anger and affliction are produced daily in the hearts of my dear countrywomen by the breach of this frail furniture! Some of them pay half their servants' wages in china fragments, which their carelessness has produced. "If thou hast a piece of earthen ware, consider," says Epictetus, "that it is a piece of earthen ware, and very easy and obnoxious to be broken: be not therefore so void of reason as to be angry or grieved when this comes to pass." In order therefore to exempt my fair readers from such additional and supernumerary calamities of life, I would advise them to forbear dealing in these perishable commodities, till such time as they are philosophers enough to keep their temper at the fall of a teapot or a china cup. I shall further recommend to their serious consideration these three particulars: first, that all china ware is of a weak and transitory nature: secondly, that the fashion of it is changeable; and thirdly, that it is of no use. And first of the first: the fragility of china is such as a reasonable being ought

by no means to set its heart upon, though, at the same time, I am afraid I may complain with Seneca on the like occasion, that this very consideration recommends them to our choice, our luxury being grown so wanton, that this kind of treasure becomes the more valuable, the more easily we may be deprived of it, and that it receives a price from its brittleness. There is a kind of ostentation in wealth, which sets the possessors of it upon distinguishing themselves in those things where it is hard for the poor to follow them. For this reason I have often wondered that our ladies have not taken pleasure in egg-shells, especially in those which are curiously stained and streaked, and which are so very tender that they require the nicest hand to hold without breaking them. But, as if the brittleness of this ware were not sufficient to make it costly, the very fashion of it is changeable, which brings me to my second particular.

It may chance, that a piece of china may survive all those accidents to which it is by nature liable, and last for some years, if rightly situated and taken care of. To remedy, therefore, this inconvenience, it is so ordered that the shape of it shall grow unfashionable, which makes new supplies always necessary, and furnishes employment for life to women of great and generous souls, who cannot live out of the mode. I myself remember, when there were few china vessels to be seen that held more than a dish of coffee; but their size is so gradually enlarged, that there are many at present which are capable of holding half a hogshead.

The fashion of the teacup is also greatly altered, and has run through a wonderful variety of colour, shape, and size.

But, in the last place, china ware is of no use. Who would not laugh, to see a smith's shop furnished with anvils and hammers of china? The furniture of a lady's favourite room is altogether as absurd: you see jars of a prodigious capacity, that are to hold nothing. I have seen horses and herds of cattle in this fine sort of porcelain, not to mention the several Chinese ladies, who, perhaps, are naturally enough represented in these frail materials.

Did our women take delight in heaping up piles of earthen platters, brown jugs, and the like useful products of our British potteries, there would be some sense in it. They might be ranged in as fine figures, and disposed of in as beautiful pieces of architecture; but there is an objection to these which cannot be overcome, namely, that they would be of some use, and might be taken down on all occasions to be employed in the services of the family; besides that they are intolerably cheap, and most shamefully durable and lasting.

The Lover, No. 10. Thursday, March 18, 1714.

CLXVII

Patriotic Ladies

Honi soit qui mal y pense.

By our latest advices, both from town and country, it appears that the ladies of Great Britain, who are able

to bear arms, that is, to smile or frown to any purpose, have already begun to commit hostilities upon the men of each opposite party.[1] To this end we are assured, that many of them on both sides exercise before their glasses every morning; that they have already cashiered several of their followers as mutineers, who have contradicted them in some political conversations; and that the Whig ladies in particular design very soon to have a general review of their forces at a play bespoken by one of their leaders. This set of ladies, indeed, as they daily do duty at court, are much more expert in the use of their airs and graces than their female antagonists, who are most of them bred in the country; so that the sisterhood of loyalists, in respect of the fair malcontents, are like an army of regular forces compared with a raw undisciplined militia.

It is to this misfortune in their education that we may ascribe the rude and opprobrious language with which the disaffected part of the sex treat the present royal family. A little lively rustic, who hath been trained up in ignorance and prejudice, will prattle treason a whole winter's evening, and string together a parcel of silly seditious stories, that are equally void of decency and truth. Nay, you sometimes meet

[1] The *Freeholder*, from which this and all the following essays are extracted, was written by Addison alone, and published during the rebellion of 1715–1716. The aim of the publication was to confirm the loyalty of the nation to King George, and to strengthen the Government in its conflict with the rebels, who would have restored the banished Stuart line. In these essays Addison laid aside the mask of political neutrality which he had so long worn, and openly drew his sword, or rather dipped his pen, on the side of the Whig ministry.

with a zealous matron who sets up for the pattern of a parish, uttering such invectives as are highly misbecoming her, both as a woman and a subject. In answer therefore to such disloyal termagants, I shall repeat to them a speech of the honest and blunt Duke du Sully to an assembly of Popish ladies, who were railing very bitterly against Henry the Fourth, at his accession to the French throne; "Ladies," said he, "you have a very good king, if you know when you are well. However, set your hearts at rest, for he is not a man to be scolded or scratched out of his kingdom."

But as I never care to speak of the fair sex, unless I have an occasion to praise them, I shall take my leave of these ungentle damsels; and only beg of them, not to make themselves less amiable than nature designed them, by being rebels to the best of their abilities, and endeavouring to bring their country into bloodshed and confusion. Let me therefore recommend to them the example of those beautiful associates, whom I mentioned in my eighth paper, as I have received the particulars of their behaviour from the person with whom I lodged their association.

This association being written at length in a large roll of the finest vellum, with three distinct columns for the maids, wives, and widows, was opened for the subscribers near a fortnight ago. Never was a subscription for a raffling or an opera more crowded. There is scarce a celebrated beauty about town that you may not find in one of the three lists; insomuch, that if a man, who did not know the design, should read

only the names of the subscribers, he would fancy every column to be a catalogue of toasts. Mr. Motteux has been heard to say more than once, that if he had the portraits of all the associates, they would make a finer auction of pictures than he or anybody else had exhibited.

Several of these ladies, indeed, criticized upon the form of the association. One of them, after the perusal of it, wondered that among the features to be used in defence of their country, there was no mention made of *teeth*; upon which she smiled very charmingly, and discovered as fine a set as ever eye beheld. Another, who was a tall lovely prude, holding up her head in a most majestic manner, said, with some disdain, she thought a *good neck* might have done his Majesty as much service as smiles or dimples. A third looked upon the association as defective, because so necessary a word as *hands* was omitted; and by her manner of taking up the pen, it was easy to guess the reason of her objection.

Most of the persons who associated have done much more than by the letter of the association they were obliged to; having not only set their names to it, but subscribed their several aids and subsidies for the carrying on so good a cause. In the virgin column is one who subscribes fifteen lovers, all of them good men and true. There is another who subscribes five admirers, with one tall handsome black man fit to be a colonel. In short, there is scarce one in this list who does not engage herself to supply a quota of brisk

young fellows, many of them already equipped with hats and feathers. Among the rest was a pretty sprightly coquette with sparkling eyes, who subscribed two quivers of arrows.

In the column of wives, the first that took pen in hand writ her own name and one vassal, meaning her husband. Another subscribes her husband and three sons. Another, her husband and six coach-horses. Most in this catalogue paired themselves with their respective mates, answering for them as men of honest principles and fit for the service.

N.B.—There were two in this column that wore association ribbons: the first of them subscribed her husband and her husband's friend; the second a husband and five lovers; but upon inquiry into their characters, they are both of them found to be Tories, who hung out false colours to be spies upon the association, or to insinuate to the world by their subscriptions, as if a lady of Whig principles could love any man besides her husband.

The widows' column is headed by a fine woman who calls herself Boadicea, and subscribes six hundred tenants. It was indeed observed that the strength of the association lay most in this column; every widow, in proportion to her jointure, having a great number of admirers, and most of them distinguished as able men. Those who have examined this list, compute that there may be three regiments raised out of it, in which there shall not be one man under six foot high.

I must not conclude this account without taking notice of the association-ribbon, by which these beautiful confederates have agreed to distinguish themselves. It is indeed so very pretty an ornament, that I wonder any Englishwoman will be without it. A lady of the association who bears this badge of allegiance upon her breast, naturally produces a desire in every male beholder of gaining a place in a heart which carries on it such a visible mark of its fidelity. When the beauties of our island are thus industrious to show their principles as well as their charms, they raise the sentiments of their countrymen, and inspire them at the same time both with loyalty and love. What numbers of proselytes may we not expect, when the most amiable of the Britons thus exhibit to their admirers the only terms upon which they are to hope for any correspondence or alliance with them! It is well known that the greatest blow the French nation ever received, was the dropping of a fine lady's garter in the reign of King Edward the Third. The most remarkable battles which have been since gained over that nation, were fought under the auspices of a blue ribbon. As our British ladies have still the same faces, and our men the same hearts, why may we not hope for the same glorious achievements from the influence of this beautiful breast-knot?

The Freeholder, No. 11. Friday, January 27, 1716.

CLXVIII

The Tory Fox-Hunter

Studiis rudis, sermone barbarus, impetu strenuus, manu promptus, cogitatione celer. VELL. PATERC.

FOR the honour of his Majesty and the safety of his government we cannot but observe, that those who have appeared the greatest enemies to both, are of that rank of men who are commonly distinguished by the title of Fox-hunters. As several of these have had no part of their education in cities, camps, or courts, it is doubtful whether they are of greater ornament or use to the nation in which they live. It would be an everlasting reproach to politics, should such men be able to overturn an establishment which has been formed by the wisest laws, and is supported by the ablest heads. The wrong notions and prejudices which cleave to many of these country gentlemen, who have always lived out of the way of being better informed, are not easy to be conceived by a person who has never conversed with them.

That I may give my readers an image of these rural statesmen, I shall, without further preface, set down an account of a discourse I chanced to have with one of them some time ago. I was travelling towards one of the remote parts of England, when about three o'clock in the afternoon, seeing a country gentleman trotting before me with a spaniel by his horse's side, I make up to him. Our conversation opened, as usual,

upon the weather, in which we were very unanimous, having both agreed that it was too dry for the season of the year. My fellow-traveller, upon this, observed to me, that there had been no good weather since the Revolution. I was a little startled at so extraordinary a remark, but would not interrupt him till he proceeded to tell me of the fine weather they used to have in King Charles the Second's reign. I only answered, that I did not see how the badness of the weather could be the king's fault; and, without waiting for his reply, asked him whose house it was we saw upon a rising ground at a little distance from us. He told me it belonged to an old fanatical cur, Mr. Such-a-one. "You must have heard of him," says he, "he's one of the Rump." I knew the gentleman's character upon hearing his name, but assured him, that to my knowledge he was a good churchman: "Ay!" says he, with a kind of surprise, "we were told in the country that he spoke twice in the Queen's time against taking off the duties upon French claret." This naturally led us into the proceedings of late parliaments, upon which occasion he affirmed roundly, that there had not been one good law passed since King William's accession to the throne, except the act for preserving the game. I had a mind to see him out, and therefore did not care for contradicting him. "Is it not hard," says he, "that honest gentlemen should be taken into custody of messengers to prevent them from acting according to their consciences? But," says he, "what can we expect when a parcel of factious sons of whores——"

He was going on in great passion, but chanced to miss his dog, who was amusing himself about a bush that grew at some distance behind us. We stood still till he had whistled him up; when he fell into a long panegyric upon his spaniel, who seemed indeed excellent in his kind: but I found the most remarkable adventure of his life was, that he had once like to have worried a dissenting teacher. The master could hardly sit on his horse for laughing all the while he was giving me the particulars of this story, which I found had mightily endeared his dog to him, and, as he himself told me, had made him a great favourite among all the honest gentlemen of the country. We were at length diverted from this piece of mirth by a post-boy, who winding his horn at us, my companion gave him two or three curses, and left the way clear for him. "I fancy," said I, "that post brings news from Scotland.[1] I shall long to see the next *Gazette*." "Sir," says he, "I make it a rule never to believe any of your printed news. We never see, sir, how things go, except now and then in Dyer's *Letter*, and I read that more for the style than the news. The man has a clever pen, it must be owned. But is it not strange that we should

[1] The fire of rebellion was still smouldering in the Highlands of Scotland when this paper was written. Dutch troops, as the fox-hunter informs us a few lines below, were employed in its suppression; and according to a Jacobite writer they "left nothing earthly undestroyed" between Stirling and Inverness, and "the English troops were very little more merciful." See I. S. Leadam, *The History of England from the Accession of Anne to the Death of George II.* (London, 1909), p. 262.

be making war upon Church of England men, with Dutch and Swiss soldiers, men of antimonarchical principles? These foreigners will never be loved in England, sir; they have not that wit and good-breeding that we have." I must confess, I did not expect to hear my new acquaintance value himself upon these qualifications, but finding him such a critic upon foreigners, I asked him if he had ever travelled; he told me he did not know what travelling was good for, but to teach a man to ride the great horse, to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience: to which he added, that he scarce ever knew a traveller in his life who had not forsook his principles, and lost his hunting-seat. "For my part," says he, "I and my father before me have always been for passive obedience, and shall be always for opposing a prince who makes use of ministers that are of another opinion. But where do you intend to inn to-night?" (for we were now come in sight of the next town); "I can help you to a very good landlord, if you will go along with me. He is a lusty jolly fellow, that lives well, at least three yards in the girth, and the best Church of England man upon the road." I had a curiosity to see this high-church inn-keeper, as well as to enjoy more of the conversation of my fellow-traveller, and therefore readily consented to set our horses together for that night. As we rode side by side through the town, I was let into the characters of all the principal inhabitants whom we met in our way. One was a dog, another a whelp, another a cur, and another the son of a bitch,

under which several denominations were comprehended all that voted on the Whig side in the last election of burgesses. As for those of his own party, he distinguished them by a nod of his head, and asking them how they did by their Christian names. Upon our arrival at the inn, my companion fetched out the jolly landlord, who knew him by his whistle. Many endearments and private whispers passed between them; though it was easy to see, by the landlord's scratching his head, that things did not go to their wishes. The landlord had swelled his body to a prodigious size, and worked up his complexion to a standing crimson by his zeal for the prosperity of the church, which he expressed every hour of the day, as his customers dropped in, by repeated bumpers. He had not time to go to church himself, but, as my friend told me in my ear, had headed a mob at the pulling down of two or three meeting-houses. While supper was preparing, he enlarged upon the happiness of the neighbouring shire; "For," says he, "there is scarce a Presbyterian in the whole county, except the bishop."[1] In short, I found by his discourse that he had learned a great deal of politics, but not one word of religion, from the parson of his parish; and indeed that he had scarce any other notion of religion, but that it consisted in hating Presbyterians. I had a remarkable instance of his

[1] The bishop in question doubtless stood for the Hanoverian interest, to which perhaps he owed his preferment; and the distinction between Presbyterianism and loyalty to the Hanoverian line was too subtle for the apprehension of the fox-hunting intellect.

notions in this particular. Upon seeing a poor decrepit old woman pass under the window where we sat, he desired me to take notice of her; and afterwards informed me, that she was generally reputed a witch by the country people, but that, for his part, he was apt to believe she was a Presbyterian.

Supper was no sooner served in, than he took occasion, from a shoulder of mutton that lay before us, to cry up the plenty of England, which would be the happiest country in the world, provided we would live within ourselves. Upon which he expatiated on the inconveniences of trade, that carried from us the commodities of our country, and made a parcel of upstarts as rich as men of the most ancient families of England. He then declared frankly, that he had always been against all treaties and alliances with foreigners: "Our wooden walls," says he, "are our security, and we may bid defiance to the whole world, especially if they should attack us when the militia is out." I ventured to reply, that I had as great an opinion of the English fleet as he had; but I could not see how they could be paid, and manned, and fitted out, unless we encouraged trade and navigation. He replied, with some vehemence, that he would undertake to prove, trade would be the ruin of the English nation. I would fain have put him upon it; but he contented himself with affirming it more eagerly, to which he added two or three curses upon the London merchants, not forgetting the directors of the bank. After supper he asked me if I was an admirer of punch; and immediately called

for a sneaker. I took this occasion to insinuate the advantages of trade, by observing to him that water was the only native of England that could be made use of on this occasion; but that the lemons, the brandy, the sugar, and the nutmeg were all foreigners. This put him into some confusion; but the landlord, who overheard me, brought him off by affirming, that for constant use there was no liquor like a cup of English water, provided it had malt enough in it. My squire laughed heartily at the conceit, and made the landlord sit down with us. We sat pretty late over our punch; and, amidst a great deal of improving discourse, drank the healths of several persons in the country whom I had never heard of, that, they both assured me, were the ablest statesmen in the nation; and of some Londoners, whom they extolled to the skies for their wit, and who, I knew, passed in town for silly fellows. It being now midnight, and my friend perceiving by his almanack that the moon was up, he called for his horse, and took a sudden resolution to go to his house, which was at three miles' distance from the town, after having bethought himself that he never slept well out of his own bed. He shook me very heartily by the hand at parting, and discovered a great air of satisfaction in his looks, that he had met with an opportunity of showing his parts, and left me a much wiser man than he found me.

The Freeholder, No. 22. Monday, March 5, 1716.

CLXIX

Political Termagants

Bella viri pacemque gerant, queis bella gerenda.—VIRG.

WHEN the Athenians had long contended against the power of Philip, he demanded of them to give up their orators, as well knowing their opposition would be soon at an end, if it were not irritated from time to time by these tongue-warriors. I have endeavoured, for the same reason, to gain our female adversaries, and by that means to disarm the party of its principal strength. Let them give us up their women, and we know by experience how inconsiderable a resistance we are to expect from their men.

This sharp political humour has but lately prevailed in so great a measure as it now does among the beautiful part of our species. They used to employ themselves wholly in the scenes of a domestic life, and provided a woman could keep her house in order, she never troubled herself about regulating the commonwealth. The eye of the mistress was wont to make her pewter shine, and to inspect every part of her household furniture as much as her looking-glass. But at present our discontented matrons are so conversant in matters of state, that they wholly neglect their private affairs; for we may always observe that a gossip in politics is a slattern in her family.

It is indeed a melancholy thing to see the disorders

of a household that is under the conduct of an angry stateswoman, who lays out all her thoughts upon the public, and is only attentive to find out miscarriages in the ministry. Several women of this turn are so earnest in contending for hereditary right, that they wholly neglect the education of their sons and heirs; and are so taken up with their zeal for the church, that they cannot find time to teach their children their catechism. A lady who thus intrudes into the province of the men, was so astonishing a character among the old Romans, that when Amaesia presented herself to speak before the senate, they looked upon it as a prodigy, and sent messengers to inquire of the oracle, what it might portend to the commonwealth ?[1]

It would be manifestly to the disadvantage of the British cause, should our pretty loyalists profess an indifference in state affairs, while their disaffected sisters are thus industrious to the prejudice of their country; and accordingly we have the satisfaction to find our she-associates are not idle upon this occasion. It is owing to the good principles of these his Majesty's fair and faithful subjects, that our countrywomen appear no less amiable in the eyes of the male world than they have done in former ages. For where a great number of flowers grow, the ground at a distance seems entirely covered with them, and we must walk into it, before we can distinguish the several weeds

[1] Amaesia was tried on a criminal charge before a praetor, not the senate, and defended herself so well that the jury acquitted her by a large majority. See Valerius Maximus viii. 3. 1; Plutarch, *Lycurgi et Numae Comparatio*, 3.

that spring up in such a beautiful mass of colours. Our great concern is, to find deformity can arise among so many charms, and that the most lovely parts of the creation can make themselves the most disagreeable. But it is an observation of the philosophers, that the best things may be corrupted into the worst; and the ancients did not scruple to affirm, that the Furies and the Graces were of the same sex.

As I should do the nation and themselves good service, if I could draw the ladies, who still hold out against his Majesty, into the interest of our present establishment, I shall propose to their serious consideration the several inconveniences which those among them undergo who have not yet surrendered to the government.

They should first reflect on the great sufferings and persecutions to which they expose themselves by the obstinacy of their behaviour. They lose their election in every club where they are set up for toasts. They are obliged by their principles to stick a patch on the most unbecoming side of their foreheads. They forego the advantage of birthday suits. They are insulted by the loyalty of claps and hisses every time they appear at a play. They receive no benefit from the army, and are never the better for all the young fellows that wear hats and feathers. They are forced to live in the country and feed their chicken, at the same time that they might show themselves at court and appear in brocade, if they behaved themselves well. In short, what must go to the heart of every

fine woman, they throw themselves quite out of the fashion.

The above-mentioned motive must have an influence upon the gay part of the sex; and as for those who are acted by more sublime and moral principles, they should consider, that they cannot signalize themselves as malcontents without breaking through all the amiable instincts and softer virtues, which are peculiarly ornamental to womankind. Their timorous, gentle, modest behaviour; their affability, meekness, good-breeding, and many other beautiful dispositions of mind, must be sacrificed to a blind and furious zeal for they do not know what. A man is startled when he sees a pretty bosom heaving with such party-rage, as is disagreeable even in that sex which is of a more coarse and rugged make. And yet such is our misfortune, that we sometimes see a pair of stays ready to burst with sedition; and hear the most masculine passions expressed in the sweetest voices. I have lately been told of a country-gentlewoman, pretty much famed for this virility of behaviour in party-disputes, who, upon venting her notions very freely in a strange place, was carried before an honest justice of the peace. This prudent magistrate, observing her to be a large black woman, and finding by her discourse that she was no better than a rebel in a riding-hood, began to suspect her for my Lord Nithsdale;[1] till a stranger

[1] William Maxwell, fifth Earl of Nithsdale, took part in the Jacobite rebellion of 1715, and being captured at the battle of Preston was tried and sentenced to death. In vain his devoted

came to her rescue, who assured him, with tears in his eyes, that he was her husband.

In the next place, our British ladies may consider, hat by interesting themselves so zealously in the fairs of the public they are engaged, without any ecessity, in the crimes which are often committed ven by the best of parties, and which they are naturally exempted from by the privilege of their sex. The worst character a female could formerly arrive at, was of being an ill woman; but by their present conduct she may likewise deserve the character of an ill subject. They come in for their share of political guilt, and have found a way to make themselves much greater criminals than their mothers before them.

I have great hopes that these motives, when they are assisted by their own reflections, will incline the fair ones of the adverse party to come over to the national interest, in which their own is so highly concerned; especially if they consider, that by these superfluous employments, which they take upon them as partisans, they do not only dip themselves in an unnecessary guilt, but are obnoxious to a grief and anguish of mind which doth not properly fall within their lot. And

wife threw herself at the feet of King George and begged for mercy. The king was obdurate. But the countess did not despair. On the night before the day fixed for her husband's execution she obtained access to his cell in the Tower, and succeeded in smuggling him out disguised in a hood and cloak. The earl escaped to Dover in the livery of a servant of the Venetian ambassador, and crossing the Channel in a small boat made his way to the Court of the Chevalier at Rome. There his wife joined him, and there they both died in peace many years afterwards.

here I would advise every one of these exasperated ladies, who indulges that opprobrious eloquence which is so much in fashion, to reflect on Aesop's fable of the viper. "This little animal," says the old moralist, "chancing to meet with a file, began to lick it with her tongue till the blood came; which gave her a very silly satisfaction, as imagining the blood came from the file, notwithstanding all the smart was in her own tongue."

The Freeholder, No. 26. Monday, March 19, 1716.

CLXX

A Vision of Rebellion

—Dii visa secundent.—LUCAN.

IT is an old observation, that a time of peace is always a time of prodigies; for as our news-writers must adorn their papers with that which the critics call "The Marvellous," they are forced, in a dead calm of affairs, to ransack every element for proper amusements, and either to astonish their readers from time to time with a strange and wonderful sight, or be content to lose their custom. The sea is generally filled with monsters when there are no fleets upon it. Mount Etna immediately began to rage upon the extinction of the rebellion: and woe to the people of Catanea, if the peace continues; for they are sure to be shaken every week with earthquakes, till they are relieved by the siege of some other great town

in Europe. The air has likewise contributed its quota of prodigies. We had a blazing star by the last mail from Genoa; and in the present dearth of battles have been very opportunely entertained, by persons of undoubted credit, with a civil war in the clouds, where our sharp-sighted malcontents discovered many objects invisible to an eye that is dimmed by Whig principles.

I question not but this paper will fall in with the present humour, since it contains a very remarkable vision of a Highland seer, who is famous among the mountains, and known by the name of Second-sighted Sawney. Had he been able to write, we might probably have seen this vision sooner in print; for it happened to him very early in the late hard winter, and is transmitted to me by a student at Glasgow, who took the whole relation from him, and stuck close to the facts, though he has delivered them in his own style.

"SAWNEY was descended of an ancient family, very much renowned for their skill in prognostics. Most of his ancestors were second-sighted, and his mother but narrowly escaped being burnt for a witch. As he was going out one morning very early to steal a sheep, he was seized on the sudden with a fit of second-sight. The face of the whole country about him was changed in the twinkling of an eye, and presented him with a wide prospect of new scenes and objects, which he had never seen till that day.

"He discovered at a great distance from him a large fabric, which cast such a glittering light about it,

that it looked like a huge rock of diamond. Upon the top of it was planted a standard, streaming in a strong northern wind, and embroidered with a mixture of thistles and flower-de-luces. As he was amusing himself with this strange sight, he heard a bagpipe at some distance behind him, and turning about saw a general, who seemed very much animated with the sound of it, marching towards him at the head of a numerous army. He learnt, upon inquiry, that they were making a procession to the structure which stood before him, and which he found was the Temple of Rebellion. He immediately struck in with them; but described this march to the temple with so much horror, that he shivered every joint all the while he spoke of it. They were forced to clamber over so many rocks, and to tread upon the brink of so many precipices, that they were very often in danger of their lives. Sawney declared that, for his own part, he walked in fear of his neck every step he took. Upon their coming within a few furlongs of the temple, they passed through a very thick grove consecrated to a deity who was known by the name of Treason. They here dispersed themselves into abundance of labyrinths and covered walks which led to the temple. The path was so very slippery, the shade so exceeding gloomy, and the whole wood so full of echoes, that they were forced to march with the greatest wariness, circumspection, and silence. They at length arrived at a great gate, which was the principal avenue to that magnificent fabric. Sawney

stood some time at the entrance to observe the splendour of the building, and was not a little entertained with a prodigious number of statues, which were planted up and down in a spacious court that lay before it; but upon examining it more nicely, he found the whole fabric, which made such a glittering appearance and seemed impregnable, was composed of ice, and that the several statues, which seemed at a distance to be made of the whitest marble, were nothing else but so many figures in snow. The front of the temple was very curiously adorned with stars and garters, ducal coronets, generals' staffs, and many other emblems of honour wrought in the most beautiful frost-work. After having stood at gaze some time before this great gate, he discovered on it an inscription, signifying it to be the Gate of Perjury. There was erected near it a great colossus in snow that had two faces, and was dressed like a Jesuit, with one of its hands upon a book, and the other grasping a dagger. Upon entering into the court, he took a particular survey of several of the figures. There was Sedition with a trumpet in her hand, and Rapine in the garb of a Highlander: Ambition, Envy, Disgrace, Poverty, and Disappointment were all of them represented under their proper emblems. Among other statues, he observed that of Rumour whispering an idiot in the ear, who was the representative of Credulity; and Faction embracing with her hundred arms an old-fashioned figure in a steeple-crowned hat, that was designed to express a cunning old gipsy, called Passive-

obedience. Zeal, too, had a place among the rest, with a bandage over her eyes, though one would not have expected to have seen her represented in snow. But the most remarkable object in this courtyard was a huge tree that grew up before the porch of the temple, and was of the same kind with that which Virgil tells us flourished at the entrance of the infernal regions. For it bore nothing but dreams, which hung in clusters under every leaf of it. The travellers refreshed themselves in the shade of this tree before they entered the Temple of Rebellion, and after their frights and fatigues received great comfort in the fruit which fell from it. At length the gates of the temple flew open, and the crowd rushed into it. In the centre of it was a grim idol, with a sword in the right hand, and a firebrand in the left. The forepart of the pedestal was curiously embossed with a triumph, while the back-part, that lay more out of sight, was filled with gibbets and axes. This dreadful idol is worshipped, like several of old, with human sacrifices, and his votaries were consulting among themselves how to gratify him with hecatombs; when on a sudden they were surprised with the alarm of a great light, which appeared in the southern part of the heavens and made its progress directly towards them. This light appeared as a great mass of flame, or rather glory, like that of the sun in its strength. There were three figures in the midst of it, who were known by their several hieroglyphics to be Religion, Loyalty, and Valour. The last had a graceful air, a blooming countenance, and a star upon his breast, which

shot forth several pointed beams of a peculiar lustre. The glory which encompassed them covered the place, and darted its rays with so much strength, that the whole fabric and all its ornaments began to melt. The several emblems of honour, which were wrought on the front in the brittle materials above-mentioned, trickled away under the first impressions of the heat. In short, the thaw was so violent, that the temple and statues ran off in a sudden torrent, and the whole winter-piece was dissolved. The covered walks were laid open by the light which shone through every part of them, and the dream-tree withered like the famous gourd that was smitten by the noonday sun. As for the votaries, they left the place with the greatest precipitation, and dispersed themselves by flight into a thousand different paths among the mountains."

The Freeholder, No. 27. Friday, March 23, 1716.

CLXXI

Grub Street Biographers

Atheniensium res gestae, sicut ego existumo, satis amplae magnificaeque fuere, verum aliquanto minores tamen quam fama feruntur: sed, quia provenere ibi magna scriptorum ingenia, per terrarum orbem Atheniensium facta pro maxumis celebrantur. Ita eorum, qui ea fecere, virtus tanta habetur, quantum verbis eam potuere extollere praeclara ingenia. SALLUST.

GRATIAN, among his maxims for raising a man to the most consummate character of greatness, advises first

to perform extraordinary actions, and in the next place to secure a good historian. Without the last, he considers the first as thrown away; as indeed they are in a great measure by such illustrious persons as make fame and reputation the end of their undertakings. The most shining merit goes down to posterity with disadvantage, when it is not placed by writers in its proper light.

The misfortune is, that there are more instances of men who deserve this kind of immortality, than of authors who are able to bestow it. Our country, which has produced writers of the first figure in every other kind of work, has been very barren in good historians. We have had several who have been able to compile matters of fact, but very few who have been able to digest them with that purity and elegance of style, that nicety and strength of reflection, that subtlety and discernment in the unravelling of a character, and that choice of circumstances for enlivening the whole narration, which we so justly admire in the ancient historians of Greece and Rome, and in some authors of our neighbouring nations.

Those who have succeeded best in works of this kind, are such, who, besides their natural good sense and learning, have themselves been versed in public business, and thereby acquired a thorough knowledge of men and things. It was the advice of the great Duke of Schomberg to an eminent historian of his acquaintance, who was an ecclesiastic, that he should avoid being too particular in the drawing up of an army and

other circumstances of the day of battle; for that he had always observed most notorious blunders and absurdities committed, on that occasion, by such writers as were not conversant in the art of war. We may reasonably expect the like mistakes in every other kind of public matters, recorded by those who have only a distant theory of such affairs. Besides, it is not very probable that men, who have passed all their time in low and vulgar life, should have a suitable idea of the several beauties and blemishes in the actions or characters of great men. For this reason I find an old law quoted by the famous Monsieur Bayle, that no person below the dignity of a Roman knight should presume to write an history.

In England there is scarce any one, who has had a tincture of reading or study, that is not apt to fancy himself equal to so great a task; though it is plain that many of our countrymen, who have tampered in history, frequently show that they do not understand the very nature of those transactions which they recount. Nay, nothing is more usual than to see every man, who is versed in any particular way of business, finding fault with several of these authors, so far as they treat of matters within his sphere.

There is a race of men lately sprung up among this sort of writers, whom one cannot reflect upon without indignation as well as contempt. These are Grub Street biographers, who watch for the death of a great man, like so many undertakers, on purpose to make a penny of him. He is no sooner laid in his grave, but

he falls into the hands of an historian, who, to swell a volume, ascribes to him works which he never wrote, and actions which he never performed; celebrates virtues which he was never famous for, and excuses faults which he was never guilty of. They fetch their only authentic records out of Doctors' Commons; and when they have got a copy of his last will and testament, they fancy themselves furnished with sufficient materials for his history. This might indeed enable them in some measure to write the history of his death; but what can we expect from an author that undertakes to write the life of a great man, who is furnished with no other matters of fact besides legacies; and instead of being able to tell us what he did, can only tell us what he bequeathed? This manner of exposing the private concerns of families, and sacrificing the secrets of the dead to the curiosity of the living, is one of those licentious practices which might well deserve the animadversion of our government, when it has time to contrive expedients for remedying the many crying abuses of the press. In the meanwhile, what a poor idea must strangers conceive of those persons who have been famous among us in their generation, should they form their notions of them from the writings of these our historiographers! What would our posterity think of their illustrious forefathers, should they only see them in such weak and disadvantageous lights! But, to our comfort, works of this nature are so short-lived, that they cannot possibly diminish the memory of those patriots which they are not able to preserve.

The truth of it is, as the lives of great men cannot be written with any tolerable degree of elegance or exactness, within a short space after their decease; so neither is it fit that the history of a person, who has acted among us in a public character, should appear till envy and friendship are laid asleep, and the prejudice both of his antagonists and adherents be, in some degree, softened and subdued. There is no question but there are several eminent persons in each party, however they may represent one another at present, who will have the same admirers among posterity, and be equally celebrated by those whose minds will not be distempered by interest, passion, or partiality. It were happy for us, could we prevail upon ourselves to imagine, that one who differs from us in opinion may possibly be an honest man; and that we might do the same justice to one another, which will be done us hereafter by those who shall make their appearance in the world, when this generation is no more. But in our present miserable and divided condition, how just soever a man's pretensions may be to a great or blameless reputation, he must expect his share of obloquy and reproach; and, even with regard to his posthumous character, content himself with such a kind of consideration, as induced the famous Sir Francis Bacon, after having bequeathed his soul to God and his body to the earth, to leave his fame to foreign nations, and, after some years, to his own country.

The Freeholder, No. 35. Friday, April 20, 1716.

CLXXII

Authors and Critics

Urit enim fulgore suo qui praegravat artes
Infra se positas : extinctus amabitur idem.—HOR.

IT requires no small degree of resolution to be an author in a country so facetious and satirical as this of Great Britain. Such a one raises a kind of alarm among his fellow-subjects, and by pretending to distinguish himself from the herd, becomes a mark of public censure, and sometimes a standing object of raillery and ridicule. Writing is indeed a provocation to the envious, and an affront to the ignorant. How often do we see a person, whose intentions are visibly to do good by the works which he publishes, treated in as scurrilous a manner as if he were an enemy to mankind? All the little scramblers after fame fall upon him, publish every blot in his life, depend upon hearsay to defame him, and have recourse to their own invention, rather than suffer him to erect himself into an author with impunity. Even those who write on the most indifferent subjects, and are conversant only in works of taste, are looked upon as men that make a kind of insult upon society, and ought to be humbled as disturbers of the public tranquillity. Not only the dull and the malicious, which make a formidable party in our island, but the whole fraternity of writers rise up in arms against every new intruder into the world

of fame; and a thousand to one, before they have done, prove him not only to be a fool but a knave. Successful authors do what they can to exclude a competitor; while the unsuccessful, with as much eagerness, lay in their claim to him as a brother. This natural antipathy to a man who breaks his ranks, and endeavours to signalize his parts in the world, has very probably hindered many persons from making their appearance in print, who might have enriched our country with better productions, in all kinds, than any that are now extant. The truth of it is, the active part of mankind, as they do most for the good of their contemporaries, very deservedly gain the greatest share in their applauses; whilst men of speculative endowments, who employ their talents in writing, as they may equally benefit or amuse succeeding ages, have generally the greatest share in the admiration of posterity. Both good and bad writers may receive great satisfaction from the prospects of futurity; as in after-ages the former will be remembered, and the latter forgotten.

Among all sets of authors, there are none who draw upon themselves more displeasure than those who deal in political matters, which indeed is very often too justly incurred, considering that spirit of rancour and virulence with which works of this nature generally abound. These are not only regarded as authors but as partisans, and are sure to exasperate at least one half of their readers. Other writers offend only the stupid or jealous among their countrymen; but these, let their cause be never so just, must expect to irritate

a supernumerary party of the self-interested, prejudiced, and ambitious. They may however comfort themselves with considering, that if they gain any unjust reproach from one side, they generally acquire more praise than they deserve from the other; and that writings of this kind, if conducted with candour and impartiality, have a more particular tendency to the good of their country and of the present age, than any other compositions whatsoever.

To consider an author farther as the subject of obloquy and detraction, we may observe with what pleasure a work is received by the invidious part of mankind, in which a writer falls short of himself, and does not answer the character which he has acquired by his former productions. It is a fine simile in one of Mr. Congreve's prologues, which compares a writer to a buttering gamester, that stakes all his winnings upon every cast; so that if he loses the last throw, he is sure to be undone. It would be well for all authors, if, like that gentleman, they knew when to give over, and to desist from any farther pursuits after fame, whilst they are in the full possession of it. On the other hand, there is not a more melancholy object in the learned world than a man who has written himself down. As the public is more disposed to censure than to praise, his readers will ridicule him for his last works, when they have forgot to applaud those which preceded them. In this case, where a man has lost his spirit by old age and infirmity, one could wish that his friends and relations would keep him from the use

of pen, ink, and paper, if he is not to be reclaimed by any other methods.

The author indeed often grows old before the man, especially if he treats on subjects of invention, or such as arise from reflections upon human nature; for in this case, neither his own strength of mind, nor those parts of life which are commonly unobserved, will furnish him with sufficient materials to be at the same time both pleasing and voluminous. We find, even in the outward dress of poetry, that men who write much without taking breath, very often return to the same phrases and forms of expression, as well as to the same manner of thinking. Authors, who have thus drawn off the spirit of their thoughts, should lie still for some time, till their minds have gathered fresh strength, and by reading, reflection, and conversation, laid in a new stock of elegancies, sentiments, and images of nature. The soil that is worn with too frequent culture, must lie fallow for a while, till it has recruited its exhausted salts, and again enriched itself by the ventilations of the air, the dews of heaven, and the kindly influences of the sun.

For my own part, notwithstanding this general malevolence towards those who communicate their thoughts in print, I cannot but look with a friendly regard on such as do it, provided there is no tendency in their writings to vice and profaneness. If the thoughts of such authors have nothing in them, they at least do no harm, and show an honest industry and a good intention in the composer. If they teach me

anything I did not know before, I cannot but look upon myself as obliged to the writer, and consider him as my particular benefactor, if he conveys to me one of the greatest gifts that is in the power of man to bestow, an improvement of my understanding, an innocent amusement, or an incentive to some moral virtue. Were not men of abilities thus communicative, their wisdom would be in a great measure useless, and their experience uninstructive. There would be no business in solitude, nor proper relaxations in business. By these assistances the retired man lives in the world, if not above it; passion is composed; thought hindered from being barren, and the mind from preying upon itself. That esteem, indeed, which is paid to good writers by their posterity, sufficiently shows the merit of persons who are thus employed. Who does not now more admire Cicero as an author than as a consul of Rome? and does not oftener talk of the celebrated writers of our own country who lived in former ages, than of any other particular persons among their contemporaries and fellow-subjects?

When I consider myself as a British freeholder, I am in a particular manner pleased with the labours of those who have improved our language with the translation of old Latin and Greek authors, and by that means let us into the knowledge of what passed in the famous governments of Greece and Rome. We have already most of their historians in our own tongue; and what is still more for the honour of our language, it has been taught to express with elegance

the greatest of their poets in each nation. The illiterate among our countrymen may learn to judge from Dryden's *Virgil* of the most perfect epic performance; and those parts of Homer, which have already been published by Mr. Pope, give us reason to think that the *Iliad* will appear in English with as little disadvantage to that immortal poem.

There is another author, whom I have long wished to see well translated into English, as his work is filled with a spirit of liberty, and more directly tends to raise sentiments of honour and virtue in his reader, than any of the poetical writings of antiquity. I mean the *Pharsalia* of Lucan. This is the only author of consideration among the Latin poets who was not explained for the use of the Dauphin, for a very obvious reason; because the whole *Pharsalia* would have been no less than a satire upon the French form of government. The translation of this author is now in the hands of Mr. Rowe, who has already given the world some admirable specimens of it, and not only kept up the fire of the original, but delivered the sentiments with greater perspicuity, and in a finer turn of phrase and verse.

As undertakings of so difficult a nature require the greatest encouragements, one cannot but rejoice to see those general subscriptions which have been made to them; especially since, if the two works last mentioned are not finished by those masterly hands which are now employed in them, we may despair of seeing them attempted by others.

The Freeholder, No. 40. Monday, May 7, 1716.

CLXXIII

The Fox-Hunter in Town

Multaque praeterea variarum monstra ferarum
Centauri in foribus stabulant, scyllaeque biformes,
Et centum-geminus Briareus, ac bellua Lernae
Horrendum stridens, flammisque armata Chimaera,
Gorgones, Harpyiaeque, et forma tricorporis umbrae.
Corripit hic subita trepidus formidine ferrum
Aeneas, strictamque aciem venientibus offert.
Et, ni docta comes tenues sine corpore vitas
Admoneat volitare cava sub imagine formae,
Irruat, et frustra ferro diverberet umbras.—VIRG.

As I was last Friday taking a walk in the park, I saw a country gentleman, at the side of Rosamond's pond, pulling a handful of oats out of his pocket, and with a great deal of pleasure gathering the ducks about him. Upon my coming up to him, who should it be but my friend the fox-hunter, whom I gave some account of in my twenty-second paper! I immediately joined him, and partook of his diversion, till he had not an oat left in his pocket. We then made the tour of the park together, when, after having entertained me with the description of a decoy-pond that lay near his seat in the country, and of a meeting-house that was going to be rebuilt in a neighbouring market-town, he gave me an account of some very odd adventures which he had met with that morning; and which I shall lay together in a short and faithful history, as well as my memory will give me leave.

My friend, who has a natural aversion to London,

would never have come up, had not he been subpoenaed to it, as he told me, in order to give his testimony for one of the rebels, whom he knew to be a very fair sportsman. Having travelled all night to avoid the inconveniences of dust and heat, he arrived with his guide, a little after break of day, at Charing Cross, where, to his great surprise, he saw a running footman carried in a chair, followed by a waterman in the same kind of vehicle. He was wondering at the extravagance of their masters, that furnished them with such dresses and accommodations, when on a sudden he beheld a chimney-sweeper conveyed after the same manner, with three footmen running before him. During his progress through the Strand he met with several other figures no less wonderful and surprising. Seeing a great many in rich morning-gowns, he was amazed to find that persons of quality were up so early; and was no less astonished to see many lawyers in their bar-gowns, when he knew by his almanack that term was ended. As he was extremely puzzled and confounded in himself what all this should mean, a hackney-coach chancing to pass by him, four batts[1] popped out their heads all at once, which very much frighted both him and his horse. My friend, who always takes care to cure his horse of such starting fits, spurred him up to the very side of the coach, to the no small diversion of the batts; who, seeing him with his long whip, horse-hair periwig, jockey-belt, and coat without sleeves, fancied

[1] Said to be a sort of maskers. The word appears not to be noticed in the great Oxford dictionary of the English language.

him to be one of the masqueraders on horseback, and received him with a loud peal of laughter. His mind being full of idle stories, which are spread up and down the nation by the disaffected, he immediately concluded that all the persons he saw in these strange habits were foreigners, and conceived a great indignation against them for pretending to laugh at an English country-gentleman. But he soon recovered out of his error, by hearing the voices of several of them, and particularly of a shepherdess quarrelling with her coachman and threatening to break his bones in very intelligible English, though with a masculine tone. His astonishment still increased upon him to see a continued procession of harlequins, scaramouches, punchinellos, and a thousand other merry dresses, by which people of quality distinguish their wit from that of the vulgar.

Being now advanced as far as Somerset House, and observing it to be the great hive whence these chimeras issued forth from time to time, my friend took his station among a cluster of mob, who were making themselves merry with their betters. The first that came out was a very venerable matron, with a nose and chin that were within a very little of touching one another. My friend, at the first view fancying her to be an old woman of quality, out of his good breeding put off his hat to her, when the person, pulling off her mask, to his great surprise, appeared a smock-faced young fellow. His attention was soon taken off from this object, and turned to another that had very hollow eyes and a wrinkled face, which flourished in all the

bloom of fifteen. The whiteness of the lily was blended in it with the blush of the rose. He mistook it for a very whimsical kind of mask; but upon a nearer view he found that she held her vizard in her hand, and that what he saw was only her natural countenance touched up with the usual improvements of an aged coquette.

The next who showed herself was a female quaker, so very pretty that he could not forbear licking his lips and saying to the mob about him, "It is ten thousand pities she is not a churchwoman." The quaker was followed by half a dozen nuns, who filed off one after another up Catherine Street to their respective convents in Drury Lane.

The squire, observing the preciseness of their dress, began now to imagine after all that this was a nest of sectaries; for he had often heard that the town was full of them. He was confirmed in this opinion upon seeing a conjurer, whom he guessed to be the holder-forth. However, to satisfy himself, he asked a porter who stood next him, what religion these people were of? The porter replied, "They are of no religion; it is a masquerade." "Upon that," says my friend, "I began to smoke that they were a parcel of mummers," and being himself one of the quorum in his own county, could not but wonder that none of the Middlesex justices took care to lay some of them by the heels. He was the more provoked in the spirit of magistracy upon discovering two very unseemly objects: the first was a judge, who rapped out a great oath at his footman; and the other a big-bellied woman, who, upon taking a

leap into the coach, miscarried of a cushion. What still gave him greater offence was a drunken bishop, who reeled from one side of the court to the other, and was very sweet upon an Indian queen. But his worship, in the midst of his austerity, was mollified at the sight of a very lovely milkmaid, whom he began to regard with an eye of mercy, and conceived a particular affection for her, until he found to his great amazement that the standers-by suspected her to be a duchess.

I must not conclude this narrative without mentioning one disaster which happened to my friend on this occasion. Having for his better convenience dismounted and mixed among the crowd, he found upon his arrival at the inn, that he had lost his purse and his almanack. And though it is no wonder such a trick should be played him by some of the curious spectators, he cannot beat it out of his head, but that it was a cardinal who picked his pocket, and that this cardinal was a Presbyterian in disguise.

The Freeholder, No. 44. Monday, May 21, 1716.

CLXXIV

The Conversion of the Tory Fox-Hunter

—Cessit furor, et rabida ora quierunt.—VIRG.

I QUESTION not but most of my readers will be very well pleased to hear, that my friend the fox-hunter, of whose arrival in town I gave notice in my forty-fourth paper, is become a convert to the present establishment,

and a good subject to King George. The motives to his conversion shall be the subject of this paper, as they may be of use to other persons who labour under those prejudices and prepossessions, which hung so long upon the mind of my worthy friend. These I had an opportunity of learning the other day, when, at his request, we took a ramble together to see the curiosities of this great town.

The first circumstance, as he ingenuously confessed to me (while we were in the coach together), which helped to disabuse him, was seeing King Charles the First on horseback at Charing Cross; for he was sure that prince could never have kept his seat there, had the stories been true he had heard in the country, that forty-one was come about again.

He owned to me that he looked with horror on the new church that is half built in the Strand, as taking it at first sight to be half demolished; but upon inquiring of the workmen, was agreeably surprised to find, that instead of pulling it down, they were building it up, and that fifty more were raising in other parts of the town.

To these I must add a third circumstance, which I find had no small share in my friend's conversion. Since his coming to town, he chanced to look into the church of St. Paul about the middle of sermon-time, where, having first examined the dome to see if it stood safe (for the screw-plot still ran in his head), he observed that the lord mayor, aldermen, and city-sword were a part of the congregation. This sight had the more

weight with him, as by good luck not above two of that venerable body were fallen asleep.

This discourse held us till we came to the Tower; for our first visit was to the lions. My friend, who had a great deal of talk with their keeper, inquired very much after their health, and whether none of them had fallen sick upon the taking of Perth and the flight of the Pretender? and hearing they were never better in their lives, I found he was extremely startled; for he had learned from his cradle, that the lions in the Tower were the best judges of the title of our British kings, and always sympathized with our sovereigns.

After having here satiated our curiosity, we repaired to the Monument, where my fellow-traveller, being a well-breathed man, mounted the ascent with much speed and activity. I was forced to halt so often in this perpendicular march, that, upon my joining him on the top of the pillar, I found he had counted all the steeples and towers which were discernible from this advantageous situation, and was endeavouring to compute the number of acres they stood upon. We were both of us very well pleased with this part of the prospect; but I found he cast an evil eye upon several warehouses and other buildings that looked like barns, and seemed capable of receiving great multitudes of people. His heart misgave him that these were so many meeting-houses, but, upon communicating his suspicions to me, I soon made him easy in this particular.

We then turned our eyes upon the river, which gave

me an occasion to inspire him with some favourable thoughts of trade and merchandise, that had filled the Thames with such crowds of ships, and covered the shore with such swarms of people.

We descended very leisurely, my friend being careful to count the steps, which he registered in a blank leaf of his new almanack. Upon our coming to the bottom, observing an English inscription upon the basis, he read it over several times, and told me he could scarce believe his own eyes, for that he had often heard from an old attorney, who lived near him in the country, that it was the Presbyterians who burned down the city; "whereas," says he, "this pillar positively affirms in so many words, that 'the burning of this ancient city was begun and carried on by the treachery and malice of the Popish faction, in order to the carrying on their horrid plot for extirpating the Protestant religion and old English liberty, and introducing Popery and slavery.'" This account, which he looked upon to be more authentic than if it had been in print, I found, made a very great impression upon him.

We now took coach again, and made the best of our way for the Royal Exchange, though I found he did not much care to venture himself into the throng of that place; for he told me he had heard they were, generally speaking, republicans, and was afraid of having his pocket picked amongst them. But he soon conceived a better opinion of them, when he spied the statue of King Charles the Second standing up in the middle of the crowd, and most of the kings in

Baker's *Chronicle* ranged in order over their heads; from whence he very justly concluded, that an anti-monarchical assembly could never choose such a place to meet in once a day.

To continue this good disposition in my friend, after a short stay at Stock's Market, we drove away directly for the Mews, where he was not a little edified with the sight of those fine sets of horses which have been brought over from Hanover, and with the care that is taken of them. He made many good remarks upon this occasion, and was so pleased with his company, that I had much ado to get him out of the stable.

In our progress to St. James's Park (for that was the end of our journey) he took notice, with great satisfaction, that, contrary to his intelligence in the country, the shops were all open and full of business; that the soldiers walked civilly in the streets; that clergymen, instead of being affronted, had generally the wall given them; and that he had heard the bells ring to prayers from morning to night, in some part of the town or another.

As he was full of these honest reflections, it happened very luckily for us, that one of the king's coaches passed by with the three young princesses in it, whom by an accidental stop we had an opportunity of surveying for some time: my friend was ravished with the beauty, innocence, and sweetness, that appeared in all their faces. He declared several times, that they were the finest children he had ever seen in all his life; and assured me that, before this sight, if any one had told

him it had been possible for three such pretty children to have been born out of England, he should never have believed them.

We were now walking together in the Park, and as it is usual for men who are naturally warm and heady to be transported with the greatest flush of good nature when they are once sweetened, he owned to me very frankly, he had been much imposed upon by those false accounts of things he had heard in the country; and that he would make it his business, upon his return thither, to set his neighbours right, and give them a more just notion of the present state of affairs.

What confirmed my friend in this excellent temper of mind, and gave him an inexpressible satisfaction, was a message he received, as we were walking together, from the prisoner for whom he had given his testimony in his late trial. This person, having been condemned for his part in the late rebellion, sent him word that his Majesty had been graciously pleased to reprieve him, with several of his friends, in order, as it was thought, to give them their lives; and that he hoped before he went out of town they should have a cheerful meeting, and drink health and prosperity to King George.

The Freeholder, No. 47. Friday, June 1, 1716.

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